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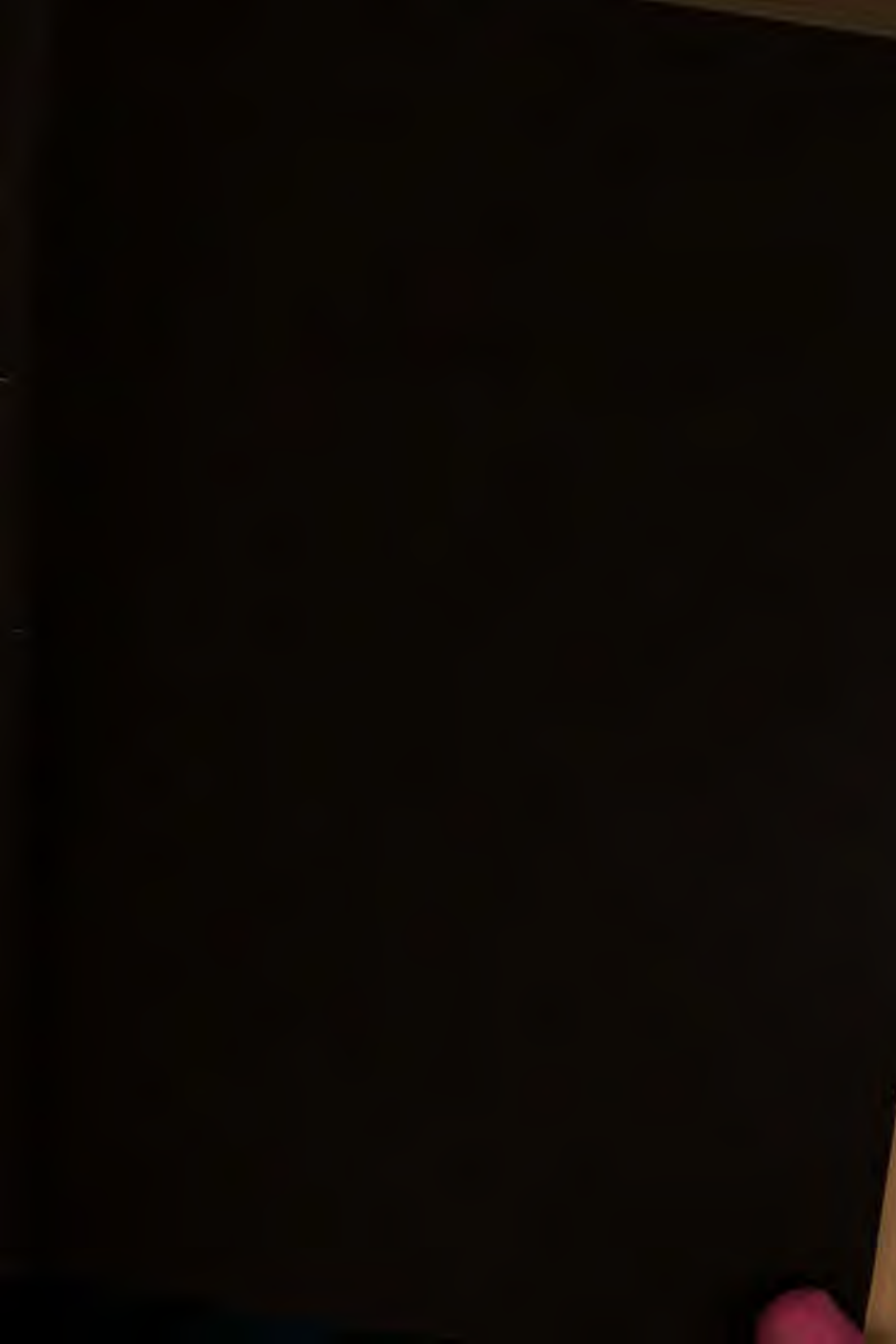
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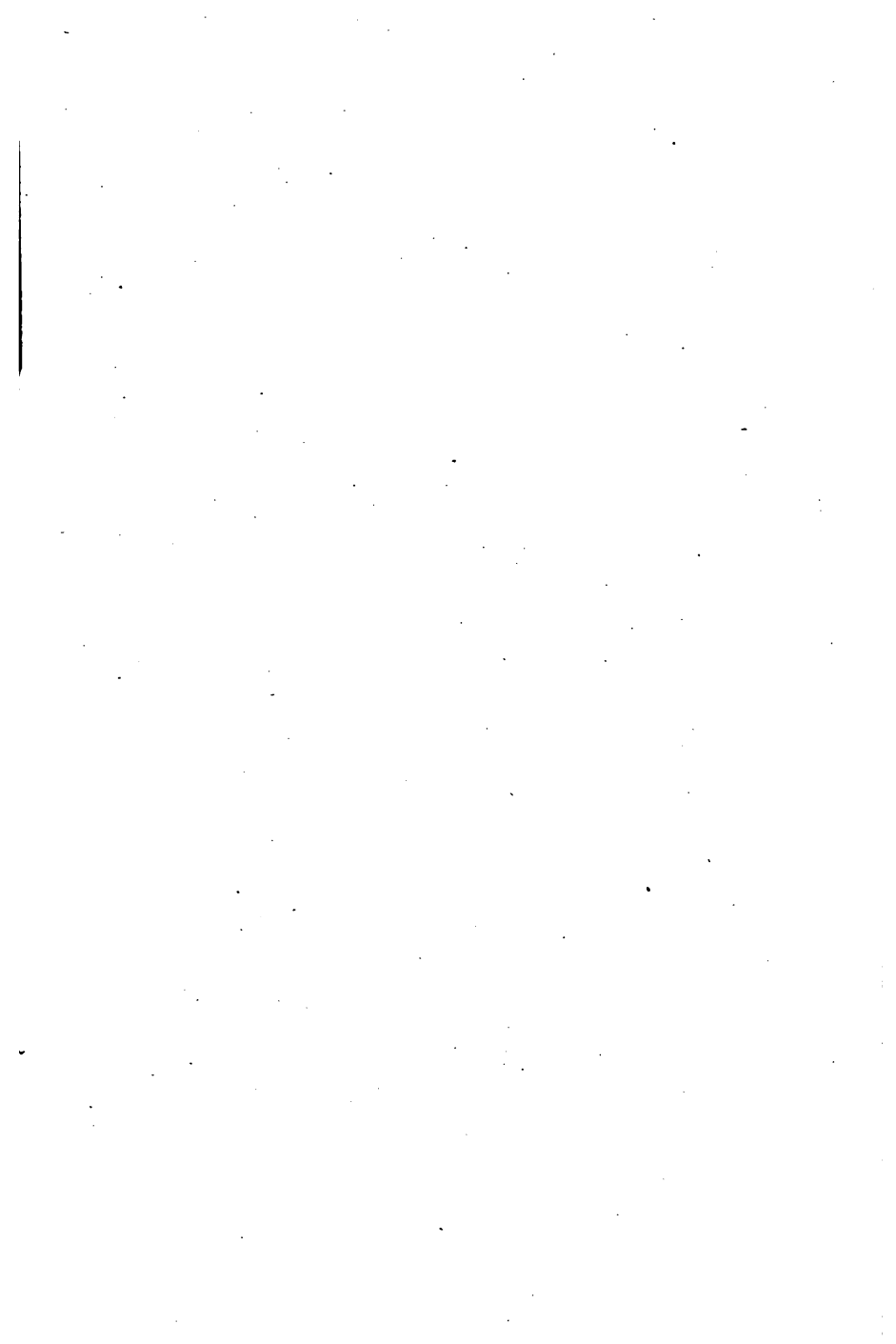
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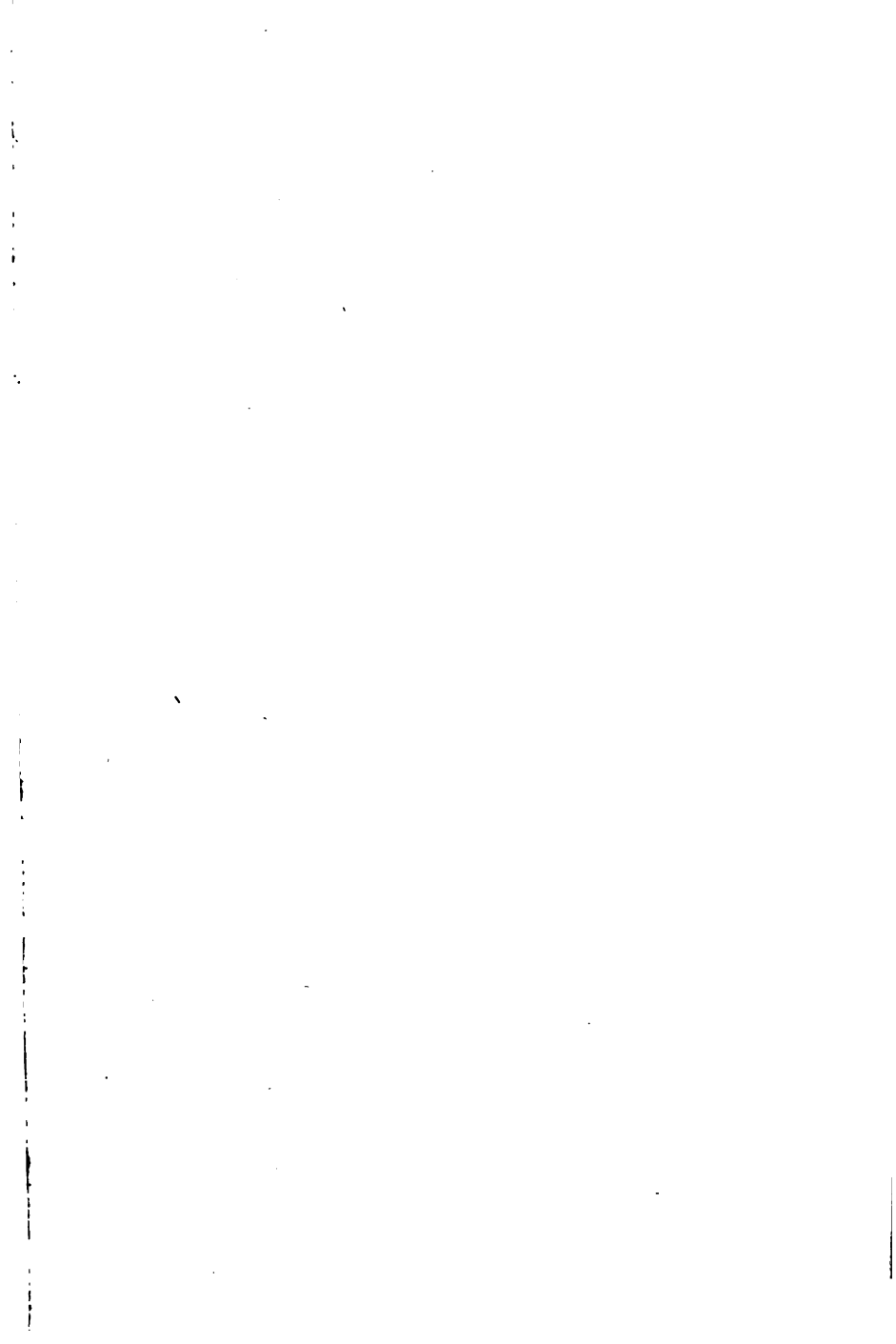
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ΛΟΓΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ.









# COMPLETE RHETORIC

BY

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Rhetoric is nothing but reason well dressed, and argument put in order.—  
JEREMY COLLIER

For my part, I am convinced that the method of teaching which approaches most nearly to the method of investigation is incomparably the best; since, not content with serving up a few barren and lifeless truths, it leads to the stock on which they grew.—BURKE

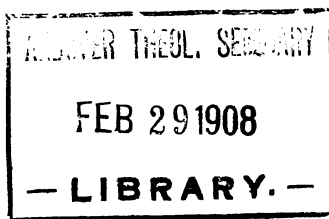
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GOVERNOR CHARLES FOSTER

There have been fewer friends on earth than kings.—COWLEY



## PREFACE.

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HAVING considered in his former work, *Essentials of English*, what may be called the mechanics of language, the author hopes in the present volume to have made an acceptable contribution to Rhetoric proper, regarded as the art of employing words in the most efficient way to instruct, to please, to convince, or to persuade.

The aim has been not merely to exercise the student in composition, but to familiarize him with the qualities of literature, to provide him with the nomenclature of criticism and with a directory of style; to acquaint him with the modes of inventing, distributing, and enforcing matter; to get him into the habit of canvassing a subject, of reading upon it reflectively, of investigating it systematically, of extracting essential facts and setting them forth effectively; for 'it is with language as with a violin,' says Vinet, 'we must learn to play it. One does not come into the world with skill to handle the bow.'

A small minority will write, almost all will read; and, while rhetorical study possesses a high value as a means of cultivating reflective habits and of refining the writer's style by indicating illustratively the excellencies that are to be followed and the faults that are to be eschewed, its great end is to increase the reader's power by affording a way toward a better discernment of the beauties in

which he takes delight, and hence, through improved imagination and taste, toward a higher stage of intellectual enjoyment.

No pains have been spared to make the illustrations and exercises apposite, ample, entertaining, and authoritative.

As to manner, a chief anxiety has been to avoid colorless and unattractive statement—a mere aggregation of rules or interpretation of law. ‘In general,’ says Quintilian, ‘bare treatises on art, through too much affectation of subtlety, break and cut down whatever is noble in eloquence; drink up all the blood of thought, and lay bare the bones, which, while they ought to exist and to be united by their ligaments, ought still to be covered with flesh.’

A treatise on such a language as ours must, to be valuable, be indebted to much that has preceded it in literary research. The author, while travelling in his own way over old ground, has been continually taught and influenced by his predecessors—Dr. Blair, Lord Campbell, Archbishop Whately, Dr. Bascom, James De Mille, Professor A. S. Hill, Professor Alexander Bain, and others. ‘It would have been ridiculous in Bonifacio,’ says Ruskin, ‘to refuse to employ Titian’s way of laying on color, if he felt it the best, because he had not himself discovered it.’ ‘The greatest,’ he adds, ‘is he who has been oftenest aided.’

A. H. W.

*Columbus, O., July 10, 1885.*

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# COMPLETE RHETORIC.

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## CHAPTER I.

### COMPREHENSION AND UTILITY.

A youth who would the Olympic honors gain,  
All arts must try and every toil sustain.—HORACE.

The wise in heart shall be called prudent, but the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.—SOLOMON.

YOU are about to begin a course of rhetorical discipline. You cannot, it is manifest, be made adequately to comprehend at once notions which the study itself is intended to enable you to understand; but it is desirable that you should be enabled to form at least some vague conception of the road that you are to travel and of the point to which it will conduct you.

In these days of paper and print, when the mind is reached chiefly through the medium of the eye, rhetoric asks not, as formerly, whether you are to be a poet, a scientist, or a debater, but simply whether it is your wish to be put in the right way of communicating yourself with power to others. Expression of thought in language is regarded, in all its varieties, as one department, governed by the same fundamental principles. Theoretically and practically, rhetoric has reference to the mode, rather than to the material, of expression. Form and substance, indeed, coexist in mutual dependence, and to know the laws of the one we must consider the nature of the other;



but wherein they are separable, the first is here the special and dominant topic of inquiry.

It has been customary to divide the arts into *fine, elegant, or liberal*; and *useful, mechanical, or practical*: the design of the first being to refine the higher faculties, and thus to afford a larger amount of a more elevated kind of enjoyment; of the second, to qualify a human being to act the part of a dexterous instrument. If for convenience we admit the division, rhetoric evidently has the character of both classes. But the distinction is essentially superficial; for, with the progress of civilization, there is a progressive union of the useful and the beautiful; while, with the growth of a more spiritual view of human destiny, whatever is conducive to the highest education of the noblest powers is held to be of preëminent use. The rhetorician may, therefore, cheerfully profess himself a utilitarian, and, on the special ground of its utility, claim for his art its peculiar importance.

Every art is closely allied to one or more sciences which furnish the principles that govern and explain it. In making harmony between matter and manner, and using both to secure worthy ends, rhetoric subsidizes *Grammar*, which unites words in correct construction; and *Logic*, which tests the validity of the reasoning. In so far as it expresses moral states, or aims to excite them, it is related to *Ethics*. It is allied to *Æsthetics* by conformity with the laws of taste—the great moderator that wars against excess. But it does not properly embrace these in their integrity. It does not assume into itself purely scientific investigations and discussions of them. It takes their laws as settled and applies them, where there is occasion, to its own purposes. Since thought is now conveyed far more frequently by the pen than by the voice, *Elocution* is but accidentally subsidiary. The two arts should be separated, because (1) their modes of training are different;

(2) vocal expression is not necessary to the artistic and forcible embodiment of thought; (3) they are distinct, so much so that great strength in either may consist with great weakness in the other. Many excellent actors have been utterly unable to construct an oration, while many excellent composers have been miserable speakers.

An argument, however, may violate no rule, either of grammar or of logic, and may also be faultlessly pronounced, yet fail of the intended effect. In other words, rhetoric has requirements of its own. It takes the thoughts thus grammatically and logically approved, and so clothes them, so arranges them, as to make the product pleasing, forceful, effective.

The laws of labor and method are equally binding upon genius and mediocrity. The common artisan owes his utmost proficiency to perfect familiarity with rules, if not with their foundation,—a forgetfulness of them in their unconscious application. Phidias will be vainly afire with the conception of Jove unless he has a prior knowledge of anatomy, and uses his chisel with painstaking care, systematically, though at last without formal teaching. The genius of Beethoven will avail nothing to the composer unless he conforms to the laws of musical form, orchestration and harmony. Always there is the search for means suited to an end. Will you do as well with scattered as with concentrated forces, as well without meditation as with it, without purpose as with it, without order as with it? Yet such is art—the assemblage of the means for making or doing a thing. To exclude it—that is, to exclude reflection or the use of method—is simply to renounce perfection. Art by exercising itself becomes what habit is in the moral life—second nature, intelligent instinct, involuntary observance of rule. This is precisely the case with Shakespeare, as attested by the Eulogy of Ben Jonson:

Yet must I not give Nature all: thy art,  
 My gentle Shakespear, must enjoy a part;  
 For though the poet's matter Nature be,  
 His art doth give the fashion; and that he  
 Who casts to write a living line must sweat,  
 (Such as thine are) and strike the second heat  
 Upon the Muses' anvil; turn the same  
 (And himself with it) that he thinks to frame;  
 Or for the laurel he may gain a scorn,  
*For a good poet's made as well as born,*  
*And such wert thou.* Look how the father's face  
 Lives in his issue, even so the race  
 Of Shakespear's mind and manners brightly shines  
*In his well-turned and true-filed lines,*  
 In each of which he seems to shake a lance,  
 As brandished at the eyes of Ignorance.

The rules of rhetoric are but a concise general expression of the manner in which it has been found that the masters have achieved success. They are generalized experience, and experience is, in all spheres, a teacher which inspired men cannot reject, to which ordinary men must attend. 'He who will not answer to the rudder must answer to the rocks.'

Perhaps all serious opposition to the art has arisen from the abuse of it, either to hide the want of sense with excess of sound and ornament, or to hoodwink the judgment by alluring the fancy, like Milton's Belial, whose tongue

Drop'd manna, and could make the worse appear  
 The better reason, to perplex and dash  
 Maturest counsels.

But, on the one hand, rhetoric does not undertake to remedy barrenness, to furnish vitalizing energy or native power—without which all art must be the merest surface-work. On the other, it is no conclusion against the excellence of the fashion, that a gentleman's livery may be worn by a rogue. Rhetoric, taking no note of differ-

ences in men, regards only their universal natural practice when they speak or write well, be they gifted or not, leaving to every one the full, free use of his peculiar resources to effect his freely chosen ends.

To exercise the imagination and improve the taste, with their attendant happy effects on life, by bringing into view the chief beauties that ought to be imitated and the leading defects that ought to be shunned ; to unlearn bad habits ; to substitute the best models for the worst or the indifferent ; to cultivate accurate thinking, as well as accurate speaking, by the careful practice of putting our sentiments into words according to law ; to enable the person of brain and emotion to put himself in communication with the minds and hearts of others under the most favorable circumstances ; to guide and develop ; to shorten the time and the uncertainty of walking in the dark ;—such are the utilities, subjective and objective, on which we rest the dignity and merit of the present study. Let us define Rhetoric, therefore, as *the art of enabling those who have something to say, to say it to the best advantage.*

## CHAPTER II.

### UNIT OF EXPRESSION—THE SENTENCE.

A form of speech which hath a beginning and an end within itself, and is of such length as to be easily comprehended at once.—**ARISTOTLE.**

**C**ONSIDERED as an internal consciousness, the recognition of congruence or confiction between two objects of thought is called a *judgment*; as expressed in language, it is called a *proposition*. An act of thought is thus a process of comparison in which three elements are involved: the determined or qualified notion, technically called the Subject; the determining or qualifying notion, called the Predicate, the affirmation or denial of identity between these two, called the Copula. The regular form for the copula is, affirmatively, the substantive 'is'; negatively, 'is not.' Thus —

Philosophy *is* the science of realities.—*Emerson.*

Each *is* bound to all.—*Spencer.*

Heaven *is not* to be expected in this world.—*Dr. A. Alexander.*

It should here be remarked that copula and predicate often coalesce, as —

Do to-day thy nearest duty.—*Goethe.*

Men *can* now believe everything but the Bible.—*Napoleon.*

A single proposition, however much expanded by the modification of its essential parts, constitutes a *simple sentence*:

Artists are nearest God.—*Holland.*

The human heart refuses to believe in a universe without a purpose.—*Kant.*

Through these watery solitudes, among the fountains of the great deep, the abode of perpetual silence, never visited by living human presence and beyond the sight of human eye, there are gliding to and fro, by night and by day, in light and in darkness, in calm and in tempest, currents of human thought, borne by the electric pulse. — *Bryant*.

If the sentence consists of several propositions, one of which is leading and the others dependent or subordinate, it is said to be *complex*:

The command that the waters should be gathered was the command that the earth should be sculptured. — *Ruskin*.

The most foolish of all errors is, that clever young heads think that they lose their originality when they recognize the truth which has already been recognized by others. — *Goethe*.

The highest minds live in thought with the great dead far more than [they live] with the living, and, next to the dead, with those ideal human beings yet to come, whom they are never destined to see. — *Comte*.

If the sentence consists of two or more coördinate combinations of subject, predicate, and copula, it is said to be *compound*. The mutually independent divisions — often called members — may themselves be complex:

I did not fall into love — I rose into love. — *Bulwer*.

Not only strike while the iron is hot, but make it hot by striking. — *Cromwell*.

The robins are not good solo singers, but their chorus, as, like primitive fire-worshippers, they hail the return of light and warmth to the world, is unrivalled. — *Lowell*.

A judgment may be expressed categorically —

To do is to succeed. — *Schiller*.

Conditionally —

Could we rest, we must become smaller in soul. — *Robertson*.

Old truths are always new to us, if they come with the smell of Heaven upon them. — *Bunyan*.

Imperatively —

Love me, and tell me so sometimes. — *Gail Hamilton*.

**Interrogatively —**

In this God's world, with its wild whirling eddies and mad foam oceans, where men and nations perish as if without law and judgment for an unjust thing sternly delayed, dost thou think that there is therefore no justice?—*Carlyle*.

**Emotionally,—** that is, in the form technically known as exclamatory —

Hang it! how I like to be liked, and what I do to be liked!—*Lamb*.

For the collocation of words, every language has its peculiar usage. If inflected, there is large scope for variety in the arrangement, since verbal relations are indicated by terminal syllables. If uninflected, like modern English, the relation of words is determined by the relation of thoughts, syntax is positional, and logical analysis precedes grammatical. Hence we find here a prescribed order, according to which the subject precedes the predicate, the object follows the verb, and modifying words are placed as near as practicable to the words modified. This syntactical and customary succession is observed so long as it coincides with the usual order of thought. To express the latter suitably, however, the former is sometimes violated. Such a departure is called *inversion*. Whatever fixes the attention most strongly, or excites the passion of the speaker, will naturally seek utterance first. Thus we are told that the preaching of Paul at Ephesus produced a general uproar, in which the people cried without intermission, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians!' Observe that the translators would have destroyed the signature of impetuosity by adhering to the habitual order, which is the order of a cool and temperate mood.

Sentences, whether simple, complex, or compound, obviously fall into two great classes — *long* and *short*. The first gives gravity and dignity to composition, but requires careful handling and a high degree of elaboration, that

the clauses be properly arranged, and the leading subject be retained prominently before the mind. If too long or too frequent, the effect is to fatigue by the difficulty of perceiving clearly the connection of the several parts, and of taking in the whole at one view. The second, requiring less attention, and easier to understand, always suits a brisk and brilliant movement; but, wanting the *cement* of thought, the connections, the 'hooks-and-eyes of the memory,' they are not so easily remembered. 'Like idle morning visitors,' says Coleridge, 'the brisk and breathless periods hurry in and hurry off in quick and profitless succession; each indeed for the moment of its stay prevents the pain of vacancy, while it indulges the love of sloth; but all together they leave the mistress of the house (the soul, I mean) flat and exhausted, incapable of attending to her own concerns, and unfitted for the conversation of more rational guests.' The long sentence, full of additions or exceptions, clumsy and unwieldy, prevails in German literature; the short, in French. 'Kant,' says De Quincey, 'might naturally enough have written a book from beginning to end in one vast hyperbolical sentence.' But, 'A long, involved sentence could not be produced from French literature, though a sultan were to offer his daughter in marriage to the man who should find it.' Long sentences characterize the writings of Hooker, Sir Thomas Browne, Milton, Johnson, Gibbon, De Quincey; short ones, the essays of Bacon, the works of Addison, Lamb, Macaulay, Emerson. Some authors exhibit an equal proportion of both. The most pleasing effect, as a rule, calls for an intermixture of the two — the stately and the sprightly. The following are examples of each:

It is not hard to die. It is harder a thousand times to live. To die is to be a man. To live is only to try to be one. To live is to see God through a glass darkly. To die is to see him face to face. To live is to be in the ore. To die is to be smelted and come out



pure gold. To live is to be in March and November. To die is to find midsummer where there is perfect harmony and perfect beauty.—*Beecher*.

Our immense extent of fertile territory opening an inexhaustible field for successful enterprise, thus assuring to industry a certain reward for its labors, and preserving the lands for centuries to come from the manifold evils of an overcrowded and consequently degraded population; our magnificent system of federated republics, carrying out and applying the principles of representative democracy to an extent never hoped or imagined in the boldest theories of the old speculative republican philosophers, the Harringtons, Sydneys, and Lockes of former times; the reaction of our political system upon our social and domestic concerns, bringing the influence of popular feeling and public opinion to bear upon all the affairs of life in a degree hitherto wholly unprecedented; the unconstrained range of freedom of opinion, of speech, and of the press, and the habitual and daring exercise of that liberty upon the highest subjects; the absence of all serious inequality of fortune and rank in the condition of our citizens; our divisions into innumerable religious sects, and the consequent co-existence, never before regarded as possible, of intense religious zeal with a degree of toleration in feeling and perfect equality of rights; our intimate connection with that elder world beyond the Atlantic, communicating to us, through the press and emigration, much of good and much of evil not our own; high science, refined art, and the best knowledge of old experience, as well as prejudices and luxuries, vices and crimes, such as could not have been expected to spring up in our soil for ages; all these, combined with numerous other peculiarities in the institutions, and in the moral, civil, and social condition of the American people, have given to our society, through all its relations, a character exclusively its own.—*Choate*.

I intrench myself in my books equally against sorrow and the weather. If the wind comes through a passage, I look about to see how I can fence it off by a better disposition of my movables. If a melancholy thought is importunate, I give another glance at my Spencer. When I speak of being in contact with my books, I mean it literally; I like to lean my head against them.—*Hunt*.

Whether long or short, sentences may be further classified into *periodic* and *loose*. The criterion of the former is, that the parts remain suspended in the mind till the

whole is finished, when the meaning is flashed back from the end to the beginning; of the second, that the construction will yield a complete sense at some point before the close. It is the closeness of connection between conclusion and commencement that gives rise to the name *period*, which signifies circuit. Thus the opening sentence of *Paradise Lost*, if stopped at 'Heavenly Muse,' would be periodic; continued to 'rhyme,' it becomes loose, several pauses being possible without incompleteness:

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit  
 Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
 Brought death into the world, and all our woe,  
 With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
 Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,  
 Sing, Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top  
 Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
 That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,  
 In the beginning how the heaven and earth  
 Rose out of chaos: or, if Sion hill  
 Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed  
 Fast by the oracle of God, I thence  
 Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
 That with no middle flight intends to soar  
 Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues  
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.—*Milton*.

A loose sentence may often be made periodic, advantageously, either by transposition or by the use of particles:

Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city.—*Revelation*.

All things are artificial, for nature is the art of God.—*Sir Thomas Browne*.

We cannot live on our past reputation, any more than our frames can be sustained on the food of which we have partaken days ago.—*McCosh*.

Then come listless irresolutions and the inevitable reaction of despair, or else the firm resolve to record upon the leaves that still

remain a more noble history than the child's story with which the book began.—*Longfellow*.

I realize that each generation is destined to confront new and peculiar perils—to wrestle with temptations and seductions unknown to its predecessors; yet I trust that progress is a general law of our being, and that the ills and woes of our future shall be less crushing than those of the bloody and hateful past.—*Greeley*.

Periodic—

‘Fallen, fallen, is that great city Babylon.’

‘Since nature is the art of God, all things are artificial.’

‘We can no more live on our past reputation than we can be sustained on the food of which we have partaken days ago.’

‘Then come *either* listless irresolutions and the inevitable reaction of despair, *or* the firm resolve to record upon the leaves that still remain a more noble history than the child's story with which the book began.’

‘While I realize that each generation is destined to confront new and peculiar perils—to wrestle with temptations and seductions unknown to its predecessors, I trust not only that progress is a general law of our being, but that the ills and woes of our future shall be less crushing than those of the bloody and hateful past.’

On comparing the two kinds of structure, periodic and loose, we find that each has its advantages and disadvantages. ‘The former savours more of artifice and design, the latter seems more the result of pure Nature. The period is nevertheless more susceptible of vivacity and force; the loose sentence is apt, as it were, to languish and grow tiresome. The first is more adapted to the style of the writer; the second, to that of the speaker. But as that style is best, whether written or spoken, which hath a proper mixture of both, so there are some things in every species of discourse which require a looser, and some which require a preciser, manner. In general, the use of periods best suits the dignity of the historian, the political writer, and the philosopher. The other man-

ner more befits the facility which ought to predominate in essays, dialogues, familiar letters, and moral tales.'<sup>1</sup>

For an objectionable example of the period, objectionable because including a tiresome number of preliminary parts, the reader is referred to the preceding passage from Mr. Choate. The following are examples of the intermediate sort, neither wholly periodic nor wholly loose,—a compromise between the two:

High on a throne of royal state which far  
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,  
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand  
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,  
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised  
To that bad eminence.—*Milton*.

The granite statue, rough hewn though it be, is far more imposing in its simple and stern though rude proportions, than the plaster-cast, however elaborately wrought and gilded.—*Macaulay*.

The vibrations which produce the impression of red light are slower, and the ethereal waves which they generate are longer, than those which produce the impression of violet; while the other colors are excited by waves of an intermediate length.—*Tyndall*.

Sentences composed of successive clauses which are constructed on the same plan, and in which corresponding words occupy corresponding places, are said to be *balanced*. Frequently the balanced expressions have contrasted meanings. When not carried to excess, this structure is evidently agreeable to the ear, and helpful to the memory. The following are illustrations:

None knew thee but to love thee,  
Nor named thee but to praise.—*Halleck*.

Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,  
Yet has her humour most when she obeys.—*Pope*.

Not that I loved Cæsar less, but that I loved Rome more.—*Shakespeare*.

Contempt is the proper punishment of affectation, and detestation the just consequence of hypocrisy.—*Johnson*.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Campbell.

Charity creates much of the misery it relieves, but does not relieve all the misery it creates.—*Senior*.

When we meet an apparent error in a good author, we are to presume ourselves ignorant of his understanding, until we are certain that we understand his ignorance.—*Coleridge*.

As I approve of a youth that has something of the old man in him, so I am no less pleased with an old man that has something of the youth.—*Cicero*.

The Book of Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, abound in sentences more or less balanced.

A group of sentences containing the development of a single topic or feature of the general subject of discourse is called a *paragraph*. It is indicated to the eye by indenting the initial line. Its value to the reader in announcing where the treatment of a point begins and ends can hardly be overestimated. The bearing of each constituent sentence upon what precedes should be explicit, and the passage from one sentence to another should be easy and natural. Observe how conjunctions, expletives, demonstratives, and repetitions are employed for reference, so as to make a link, as it were, between the preceding and the succeeding sentence or paragraph: there is no void to be filled up, no rupture of continuity:

Some things are valuable finally, or for themselves,—these are ends; other things are valuable, not on their own account, but as conducive towards certain ulterior ends,—these are means. The value of ends is absolute,—the value of means is relative. Absolute value is properly called a *good*,—relative value is properly called a *utility*. Of goods or absolute ends, there are for man but two,—perfection and happiness. By perfection is meant the full and harmonious development of all our faculties, corporeal and mental, intellectual and moral; by happiness, the complement of all the pleasures of which we are susceptible.

Now, I may state, though I cannot at present attempt to prove, that human perfection and human happiness coincide, and thus constitute, in reality, but a single end. For as, on the one hand, the perfection or full development of a power is in proportion to its

capacity of free, vigorous, and continued action, so, on the other, all pleasure is the concomitant of activity; its degree being in proportion as that activity is spontaneously intense, its prolongation in proportion as that activity is spontaneously continued; whereas, pain arises either from a faculty being restrained in its spontaneous tendency to action or from being urged to a degree, or to a continuance, of energy beyond the limit to which it of itself freely tends. To promote our perfection is thus to promote our happiness; for to cultivate fully and harmoniously our various faculties is simply to enable them, by exercise, to energise longer and stronger without painful effort; that is, to afford us a larger amount of a higher quality of enjoyment.

In considering the utility of a branch of knowledge, it behooves us, in the first place, to estimate its value as viewed simply in itself; and, in the second, its value as viewed in relation to other branches. Considered in itself, a science is valuable in proportion as its cultivation is immediately conducive to the mental improvement of the cultivator. This may be called its Absolute utility. In relation to others, a science is valuable in proportion as its study is necessary for the prosecution of other branches of knowledge. This may be called its Relative utility.

In the former point of view, that is, considered absolutely, or in itself, the philosophy of mind comprises two several utilities, according as it (1) cultivates the mind or knowing subject, by calling its faculties into exercise; and (2) furnishes the mind with a certain complement of truths or objects of knowledge. The former of these constitutes its Subjective, the latter its Objective utility. These utilities are not the same, nor do they even stand to each other in any necessary proportion. As an individual may possess an ample magazine of knowledge, and still be little better than an intellectual barbarian, so the utility of one science may be chiefly seen in affording a greater number of higher and more indisputable truths,—the utility of another in determining the faculties to a higher energy, and consequently to a higher education.—*Sir William Hamilton.*

From these general and preparatory observations on the nature and classification of sentences, we shall pass to a more particular consideration of the qualities necessary to make sentences perfect according to the standards of reputable practice.

## CHAPTER III.

### METHODS OF EXPRESSION—FIGURES.

A language without figures and metaphors would of necessity be a language without poetry.—F. W. FARRAR.

You have no *likes* in your sermons. Christ taught that the kingdom of Heaven was *like* to leaven hid in meal—*like* to a grain of mustard, etc. You tell us what things *are*, but never what they are *like*.—ROBERT HALL.

BEFORE entering, however, upon an examination of the classified excellences of expression, it is thought best to give distinct and ample consideration to a subject on which each of them is largely dependent—a subject of vast importance, whether we regard the growth of language; the lustre and the power of composition, or the just appreciation of literary art. We refer to those deviations from the plain and ordinary mode of speaking which conduce to the greater effectiveness of poetry and of prose: as, when a commentator says of an approving conscience, ‘How delightful it is to have the *bird in the bosom sing sweetly*’; or when St. Paul enumerates different topics with an unusual omission of conjunctions:

Be ye kindly affectionate one to another, with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another, not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer, distributing to the necessities of the saints, given to hospitality.

Such departures from the customary, each having a cast or turn peculiar to itself, much as the shape of one body distinguishes it from another, are called *Figures of Speech*. They affect the form, meaning, and arrangement of words, rising in value and complexity from a designedly false

spelling or an intentional obsolescence to the most elaborate variation. In their successful study, so much depends upon a proper attitude or habit of mind, that no apology is needed for here offering a few suggestions :

1. Each definition, when it is once understood, should be carefully committed to memory.

2. The examples should be studied critically, that the pupil may obtain a distinct view of their connection with the definition or principle to be illustrated.

3. At least one example under each definition should be memorized, both as a ready criterion by which others may be judged, and as something to be admired for its beauty of sentiment or imagery.

4. Other examples of each figure, original or selected, should be exhibited to the teacher by the student. Great importance is attached to this exercise—in particular to the selection of examples.

#### FIGURES OF DICTION.

**What they are.**—When the dying Jacob called his sons to his bed-side to tell them what should befall them in the last days, and said : ‘Judah is a *lion’s whelp*’; ‘Dan shall be an *adder in the path*’; ‘Joseph is a *fruitful bough*’; ‘Benjamin shall *raven as a wolf*,’ it is not to be supposed that they could understand him to mean literally what he said, but that in these words, as in a glass, they could see the fortunes which awaited them and their descendants. When the Psalmist says : ‘The Lord is my *rock* and my *fortress*, my *buckler*, and the *horn* of my salvation, and my *high tower*,’ he means, not that God is really all or any one of these objects, but that he gives to his people a similar security and protection. When Virgil calls the two Scipios ‘two *thunderbolts of war*,’ he seeks to show the military prowess of his heroes by a com-



parison with the sudden, irresistible effect of a shaft of lightning. When Shelley says :

My soul is an enchanted boat,  
Which like a sleeping swan doth float  
Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing,  
And thine doth like an angel sit  
Beside the helm conducting it,

we are not to imagine that the words in these lines are used in their ordinary sense, which would make the whole a piece of arrant nonsense. Yet the enchanted boat, the sleeping swan, the silver waves, and the angel sitting at the helm form, by their suggestions to our fancy, a vivid picture of the soul's quiet and dream-like rapture. The face of the words imports one thing—a material object; their intent, another—a spiritual condition. When, as in these examples, words are employed to signify something different from their original and common meaning, they are said to be used *figuratively*. The literal meaning being the one first given to a word, a figurative meaning is a meaning different from the first, yet suggested by it on account of a similarity. Thus the literal meaning of *head* is that part of the body containing the brain: its figurative meaning is any secondary use to denote a similar relation of parts; as, the *head* of this chapter, the *head* of a column, the *head* of a stream. The word *dull* is literally applied to a sensible object—an edged tool. Imagining that there is some likeness between the mental effect of a stupid essay and the material effect of a blunt instrument, we may speak of the essay as being *dull*—using the word in an extended or changed sense. 'A *deep* stream' is literal. 'A *deep* thinker' is figurative. Sometimes the deviation is, as has been intimated, formal rather than significant. Thus:

I saw a vision in my sleep  
That gave my spirit strength to sweep  
Adown the gulf of time.—*Campbell*.

We *ne'er* are angels till our passions die.—*Decker*.

*Whilom* in Albion's isle there dwelt a youth

Who *ne* in virtue's ways did take delight;

Ah me! in *sooth* he was a godless *wight*,

Childe Harold was he *hight*.—*Byron*.

**Figurative Association.**—When words are thus used in a sense different from that first or commonly assigned to them, three things require our attention: the literal, or, as it is sometimes called, the proper meaning of the word; the idea meant to be conveyed by it; and the connecting link between them. This connecting link, as has been indicated, is no other than the association of ideas. When a word has in the first instance been appropriated to any particular thing, and is afterward turned or converted to the representation of some other thing, its new meaning must arise from some association with the old.

**Sources of Figurative Association.**—1. As all human ideas are derived either from outward objects or from the reflections of our own minds upon such objects, it follows that the most abundant source of figurative association is the real or fancied resemblance between matter and spirit. This is a point so important that it deserves particular illustration, though already illustrated by each of the preceding examples. In the Scriptures, God is said to have made man in his own image, after his own likeness; and in all his providences, with which sacred history abounds, he is ever represented as operating by physical organs—as seeing, hearing, speaking, working, and resting, like the mere clod of humanity. Nothing could be more absurd than to insist that such statements were meant to be construed literally. To make the idea of immaterial energies intelligible to the mind of man—especially to that of the young and the uneducated—they must be presented in sensible im-

agery—imagery borrowed from objects perceptible to the five senses. Nothing that relates to spiritual nature can be so clearly and forcibly expressed as by material images—that is, by the likeness which we can all see between our thoughts and things outward. So, to signify the inward cleansing of the soul, the Psalmist says: ‘Thou shalt *wash* me, and I shall be *whiter than snow*.’ To those who ask, God is said to give the *living water*, meaning the Divine truth and grace, which nourish the soul, as the water of the spring strengthens the thirsty. Selecting the beauties of early summer to describe the prevalence of the Gospel, Isaiah says: ‘*The desert shall blossom as the rose*.’ Borrowing the imagery of war, the Scriptures speak of the *helmet* of salvation, the *shield* of faith, the *sword* of the spirit. In the parable of the sower, the several natures of men are denoted by the different kinds of *soil*, and Divine truth is the *seed*. Using the material images of plants to explain the growth of mind with its different qualities and productions, John the Baptist exhorts men to repent or to look for the speedy execution of judgment: ‘*The axe is laid unto the root of the tree; therefore, every tree which beareth not good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire*.’ The brevity of life and the transitory nature of human things are illustrated, with peculiar beauty and power, by the herbs of the field: ‘He cometh forth *like a flower*, and is cut down.’ ‘All flesh is *grass*, and all the goodness thereof is *as the flower of the field*.’

2. A second important source of figurative association is the analogy between one material substance and another, whether animate or inanimate. The names for various parts of the body are applied to things without life. Thus we speak of the *leg* of a stool; of the *foot*, *crest*, *spur*, or *shoulder* of a mountain; of the *teeth* of a comb; of the *neck* of a bottle; of the *tongue* of a shoe; of the *eye* of a

needle; of the *head* of a cabbage; of the *breast* of a wave, and the *bosom* of a rose. Plants are named from animals or the limbs of animals; as *fox-tail*, *cock's-comb*, *crane-bill*, *lark-spur*. Attributes and functions of animate beings are transformed to the inanimate, as *living* water, *living* rock, *quick-silver*, *lively* colors, *dying* embers; a comparison *stumbles*, the ground *thirsts*, and *drinks* in the dew, the hills *clap their hands*, the valleys stand so thick with corn that they *laugh* and *sing*. By a reverse process, the life of vegetables is applied to the physical life of man. We speak of the scion of a noble *stock*, the *fruit* of good works. In the same manner, human *relationships* are attributed by analogy to external things. In Æschylus, the Salmydessian harbor is a *step-mother* of ships; flame-smoke is the *sister* of fire; dust, the *brother* of wind. In Hebrew and Arabic, the arrow is the *son* of the bow; sparks are the *sons* of fire. In modern poetry, Peele calls lightning the fair *spouse* of thunder, and Tennyson says:

Earn well the thrifty days, nor wed  
Raw Haste, *half-sister* of Delay.

Figures of Diction may therefore be defined as deviations from the significant or formal value of words.

#### FIGURES OF THOUGHT.

**What they are.**—Sometimes the figure results not from a turn of the word, but rather from a turn of the thought—a deviation from the usual form of the sentence, or usual arrangement of its parts. Thus, instead of the usual form, ‘Men are ungrateful,’ we may employ the unusual form, ‘Oh, the ingratitude of men!’—which is more pleasing and far more forcible. When we desire to express an opinion more strongly than by a simple statement, we may put it in the form of a question—not to receive answer or information, but to secure greater animation and energy: ‘Who is here so vile, that will

not love his country?' 'Canst thou by searching find out God?' 'Cannot God create another world many times more fair, and cast over it a mantle of light many times more lovely?' Things of an opposite or different nature, like contrasted colors, may be rendered more striking by placing them near together: 'Every *sweet* has its *sour*, every *evil* has its *good*.' A thought may be expressed with increased force by arranging its particulars, when possible, in the ascending order of their importance; as, 'The power of man, his greatness, his glory, depend on essential qualities.' If it is desired to weaken the meaning, the order is descending; as, 'He lost his wife, his child, his household goods, and his dog, at one fell swoop.' For the sake of greater energy, a speaker may suddenly change the current of his thought, and, instead of speaking of an object in the third person, may address himself to it or to some other object directly, as if it were listening:

You have now assembled within these sacred walls to perform the last duties of respect and love, on the birthday of your benefactor, beneath that roof which has resounded of old with the master voices of American renown. Listen, Americans, to the lessons which seem borne to us on the very air we breathe, while we perform these dutiful rites. *Ye winds, that wafted the Pilgrims to the land of promise, fan in their children's hearts the love of freedom! Blood, which our fathers shed, cry from the ground! Echoing arches of this renowned hall, whisper back the voices of other days! Glorious Washington, break the long silence of that votive canvas: speak, speak, marble lips, teach us the love of liberty protected by law.*—Edward Everett.

It is thus seen that, while the words may, for the most part, be used in their established significations, the thought may be turned, or the form of the sentence may be varied from the common usage for purposes of vivacity and emphasis.

Figures of thought, therefore, are deviations from the

usual course of the thought or the usual form of the sentence. Figures of diction and figures of thought are not, we are aware, sharply divided by fixed lines—the same figure frequently shares the character of both; but the division is justified educationally if it teaches you no more than this—that some figures refer more especially to the word or idea, while others refer more especially to the sentence or thought.

Figures of speech, accordingly, may be defined as deviations from the plain and ordinary mode of expression, whereby ideas, thoughts, feelings, are conveyed more clearly, more strongly, or more elegantly.

#### CLASSIFICATION.

**Archaism.**—This may be defined as the intentional use of the older words and terminations of a language:

*I wis in all the senate*

*There was no heart so bold.*—*Macaulay.*

Eagerly I loved to borrow from my books *surcease* of sorrow.—*Poe.*

The figure is founded upon the love of the reverend and the old, very dear especially to the hearts of poets. See Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Byron's *Childe Harold* (first canto), and Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*. Where fiction, too, attempts to represent an earlier period, imitation of the dialect of that period is often an effectual means of securing the truth of resemblance.

**Mimesis.**—Similar to the preceding. It consists in mimicking the mode of spelling or dialect peculiar to individuals or communities, in order to give a lively idea of certain local or national characteristics:

And he said that he had heard

That *Hamericans* spoke *Hinglish*.—*Saxe.*

A ginooine statesman should be on his guard,  
Ef he must hev beliefs, nut to b'lieve 'em tu hard;

For, ez sure ez he does, he'll be blartin' 'em out  
 'Thout regardin' the natur' o' man more'n a spout;  
 Nor it don't ask much gumption to pick out a flaw  
 In a party whose leaders are loose in the jaw:  
 An' so in our own case I ventur' to hint  
 Thet we'd better nut air our perceedins in print.—*Lowell.*

**Tmesis.**—This is the division of a compound word into two, lending to expression the force of novel arrangement akin to inversion:

In the pleased infant see this power expand,  
 When first the coral fills his little hand.  
 Throned in its mother's lap, it dries each tear  
 When her sweet legend falls upon his ear.  
 Next it assails him in his top's strange hum,  
 Breathes in his whistle, echoes in his drum;  
 And when the waning hour to bed *ward* bids,  
 While gentle sleep sits waiting on his lids,  
 How winningly he pleads, to gain you o'er,  
 That he may read one little story more.—*Charles Sprague.*

**Ellipsis.**—By this is meant the omission of words. When not carried so far as to obscure the sense, it conduces to effectiveness by economizing the time and attention of the reader or hearer:

Women are the opposite of clocks: the clocks serve to remind us of the hours; the women, to make us forget them.—*Fontenelle.*

**Zeugma.**—This is a figure in which, by the omission of one word, another is joined to words with which it has properly no connection. It secures brevity by a forced construction:

'Separated by *mountains* and by *mutual fear*.'

'They wear a *dress* like that of the Scythians, but a *language* peculiar to themselves.'

The Caledonians were indebted for their independence to their *poverty* no less than to their *valor*.—*Gibbon.*

**Anacoluthon.**—This involves an unfinished construction, in which the first part of the sentence is suspended,

and something else is introduced. Its force lies in its suggestion of emotion or noble forgetfulness:

If thou be'st he — but O, how fallen, how changed  
From him who in the happy realms of light,  
Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine  
Myriads, though bright.—*Milton*.

**Epanorthosis.**—The retraction of a statement in order that something stronger may be substituted. Thus:

It is a shame, Mr. President, that the noble bulldogs of the administration should be wasting their precious time in worrying the rats of the opposition. [Cries of "Order!"] Rats, did I say?—mice! mice!—*John Randolph*.

**Interruptio.**—Self-interruption, in which the speaker turns from the course of his thought to something else. As in the similar cases which precede, force is gained by leaving the unuttered words to the imagination:

When Carrier ordered five hundred children under fourteen years of age to be shot, the greater part of whom escaped the fire from their size; when the poor victims ran for protection to the soldiers, and were bayoneted, clinging round their knees, would my friend — but I cannot pursue the strain of interrogation. It is too much. It would be an outrage to my friend. It would be an insult to human nature.—*Mackintosh*.

**Asyndeton.**—The unusual omission of connectives. It promotes ease and rapidity of movement:

The enemy said: I will pursue; I will overtake; I will divide the spoil; I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.—*Bible*.

All those forms of expression in which words are omitted or suppressed, are examples of ellipsis.

**Polysyndeton.**—The employment of connectives to an unusual degree. It gives emphasis by introducing circumstances in a slow and formal manner, thus compelling the mind to dwell on the particulars:

For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to



separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
—*St. Paul.*

This figure and the one immediately preceding not infrequently appear in the same passage :

So eagerly the fiend  
O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,  
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,  
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.—*Milton.*

**Alliteration.**—The recurrence of the same initial letter in emphatic words. An important characteristic of Anglo-Saxon verse, it has never ceased to be present in English poetry, though it has greatly declined in favor. It tends to emphasis by means of repetition, and, by the same means, is an aid to memory:

I *was* weary of *wandering*  
And *went* me to *reste*.—*Langlande.*

Full fathoms five thy father lies.—*Shakespeare.*

The *lisp* of *leaves*, and the *ripple* of *rain*.—*Swinburne.*

From my father I inherited only *infancy*, *ignorance*, and *indigence*.—*Henry Clay.*

**Pleonasm.**—This is the employment of more words than usual. In a skilful hand, it is capable of producing an exquisite effect.

Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.—*Bible.*

The armaments that thunder-strike the walls  
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,  
And monarchs tremble in their capitals . . . .—  
These are thy toys.—*Byron.*

**Syllepsis.**—The adapting of the construction to the sense of a word rather than to its gender or number:

While Providence supports  
Let saints securely dwell;  
That *Hand* which bears all nature up,  
Shall guide *his* children well.—*Doddridge.*

**Enallage.**—This means the substitution of one part of speech for another:

I'll *queen* it no inch farther.—*Shakespeare*.

Thou lovest *Here*, a better *Where* to find.—*Ibid*.

A braying ass did sing most *loud* and *clear*.—*Cowper*.

Whether the charmer *sinner* it or *saint* it,

If folly grow romantic, I must paint it.—*Pope*.

**Inversion.**—Novelty of order. It gives emphasis to a word by placing it in an unusual position. As our illustrations have shown, it is very frequent in English prose and poetry:

Rose a nurse of ninety years,

Set his child upon his knee;

Like summer tempest came her tears:

Sweet my child, I live for thee!—*Tennyson*.

The Ionians were susceptible, flexible, more characterized by the generosity of modern knighthood than the sternness of ancient heroism. Them, not the past, but the future charmed.—*Bulwer*.

**Metaphor.**—A metaphor is the substitution of one idea for another, with the transfer of the word denoting it; as, 'The body is the soul's *dark cottage*.' Metaphor is thus an approximately general designation for figures of diction.<sup>1</sup> As we have seen, the points to be noticed in all metaphors are:

1 The literal signification of the term.

2. The figurative, or derivative meaning of the term.

<sup>1</sup> Metaphor is from two Greek words, meaning *to carry beyond* or *to transfer*. Hence the definition. Believing that, where it accords equally with the eternal fitness of things, that classification is to be preferred which, by its simplicity and consistency, serves best the practical ends of education, we have employed the word *metaphor* in the extended sense (which is its etymological sense) given it by Aristotle and, recently, by Haven and Farrar—to denote the use of a term in any figurative as distinguished from a literal meaning, whether the figure be founded upon a resemblance between the two objects or upon some other relation. Etymology permits it, utility requires it, logic justifies it. Modern rhetoricians appear to have made it their chief business to branch figures out into a vast number of divisions by nice and vacuous distinctions, which can have no other effect than to fatigue and perplex the reader, without shedding any light upon their nature and use.

3. The relation between the two: (1) Whether it be one of resemblance. (2) Whether it be one of mere connection, as of cause and effect, the whole and its parts, etc.

4. The basis of relation or association: (1) Whether it be matter only; as, '*Sundays* are the *pillars* on which Heaven's palace lies arched.' (2) Whether it be the analogy between matter and spirit—physical properties being applied to the acts of our intellectual and moral nature; as, the *light* of knowledge, the *darkness* of ignorance, a *ray* of hope, *weighing* a subject. 'A true poet soul, for it needs but to be *struck*, and the *sound* it yields will be *music*.' (3) Whether it be analogy between spirit and matter—intellectual and moral properties being applied to physical objects; as, *impe-rious* ocean, *angry* tempest, the sun *rejoices*, the morning *laughs*.

**Metonymy.**<sup>1</sup>—Metonymy is a metaphor which indicates chiefly the relations of—

1. *Cause and effect:*

To my *advent'rous* song

That with no middle flight *intends to soar*.—*Milton*.

An attribute of the cause is here applied to the effect.

*Nursing* midnight; *drowsy* night; *pale* death.

An attribute of the effect is here applied to the cause.

We are reading *Virgil*.

The cause itself is here substituted for the effect—*writings*.

Can *gray hairs* make folly venerable?—*Junius*.

The effect is substituted for the cause—*old age*.

2. *Sign and thing signified:*

*Olive branch*, instead of peace; *laurel*, instead of victory; *White House*, for the office of President.

'The *pen* is mightier than the *sword*.'

<sup>1</sup> From two Greek words, indicating *change of name*.

3. *Container and contents:*

'The *country* is jealous of the *city*.'

'Country' and 'city' are substituted for *people*.

'Who steals my *purse* steals trash.'

'The *mountains* may fail, but the *prairies* will pour out their wealth.'

The force of this metaphor consists in the use of a particular for a more general form. A special feature is easier to grasp, and is more striking, than the main subject. How much more expressive is *red tape* than the thing signified,—the difficulties in reaching a result that must pass the routine of office.

**Synecdoche.**<sup>1</sup>—Synecdoche is a metaphor that indicates the relation of the whole to its parts. It has various forms, answering to the different kinds of wholes and parts.

1. *A part is put for the whole:*

'A *sail!* a *sail!* a promised prize to hope.'

'No sheltering *roof* was nigh.'

'Sail' is here put for *ship* and 'roof' for *house*.

2. *The whole is put for a part:*

'Belinda smiled, and *all the world* was gay.'

'Cursed be the *day* when a man child was born.'

3. *The attribute is put for the subject:*

'And all that *beauty*, all that *wealth* e'er gave.'

'Together with that fair and warlike form  
In which the *majesty* of buried Denmark  
Did sometimes march.'

The attributes 'beauty,' 'wealth,' and 'majesty,' are put for the subjects (persons) in whom they inhere.

4. *A definite number is put for an indefinite:*

'*Nine-tenths* of the people desire this change.'

'*Ten-thousand* were on our left.'

<sup>1</sup> From the Greek, meaning *taken with*, or *taken together*.

‘Nine-tenths’ for a *large majority*, and ‘ten-thousand’ for a *great number*.

5. *An individual is put for the class or species :*

‘He is a *Homer*’—for ‘He is an *epic poet*.’

‘He is a *Cicero*’—for ‘He is an *orator*.’

‘He is a *Solomon*’—for ‘He is a *wise man*.’

6. *The name of the material is put for the thing made :*

‘The breathing *marble* and the glowing *canvas*.’

‘His *steel* gleamed on high.’

‘*Marble*,’ ‘*canvas*,’ and ‘*steel*’ for *statue*, *portrait*, and *sword*.

Cases 3, 4, 5, and 6 are plainly resolvable into the one case of the whole and its parts, or the general and the particular. The subject, for example, is the whole, of which the attribute is a part; the material is the whole, of which the thing made is a part; the species is relatively the whole, of which the individual is a part, etc.

Between metonymy and synecdoche there is no important distinction. The specifications under each may serve, however, to give an opening into the numerous relations by which the mind is assisted to pass from one object to another, and to understand, from the substituted idea, the other meant to be conveyed.

The philosophy of both figures is, that definite expressions are more forcible than the indefinite. ‘He is a *Judas*,’ is more expressive than ‘He is a *traitor*.’

**Periphrasis.**—The naming of a person or thing, not directly, but in a roundabout way, by means of some characteristic or attendant circumstance; as when, in *Hiawatha*, September is called

The moon of the falling leaves.

Again—

It is the hour when from the boughs  
The nightingale’s high note is heard.—*Byron*.

Things often receive new beauty by being described at greater length, or are made more impressive by being presented in a new light.

**Euphemism.**—Really a variety of the preceding figure. It is a softening down, by an agreeable name, of what is disagreeable, base or bad:

Convey him to the tower.

Convey! Oh Good! Conveyers are you all.—*Shakespeare.*

Sleep that no pain shall wake,

Night that no moon shall break,

Till joy shall overtake

Her perfect calm.—*Rossetti.*

**Pun.**—The pun is the use of the same word in different senses, or words of similar sound in opposite relations. Thus Satan, standing in front of concealed artillery, loaded and ready for action, with the opposing armies of Heaven in battle array, addresses himself to his followers, under pretense of making overtures of peace to the enemy:

Heav'n witness thou anon, while we *discharge*

Freely our part; ye who appointed stand,

Do as you have in *charge*, and briefly *touch*

What we *propound*, and *loud* that all may hear.

The pun is in most cases a form of metaphor.

**Irony.**<sup>1</sup>—Irony is the use of words which literally express the contrary of what is meant. Thus, Job's address to his friends:

No doubt ye are the people and wisdom will die with you.

Also, Elijah's reproof of the prophets of Baal, who were appealing in vain to their god for some demonstration of his power and presence:

'Cry aloud, for he is a god! Either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked!'

<sup>1</sup> From the Greek, indicating a *dissembler in speech*.

So Satan, marking the confusion into which the enemy were thrown by the unexpected discharge of the 'long and hollow engines,' calls out:

O friends, why come not on these victors proud?  
Erewhile they fierce were coming; and when we,  
To entertain them fair with open front  
And breast (what could we more?) propounded terms  
Of composition, straight they changed their minds,  
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,  
As they would dance, yet for a dance they seem'd  
Somewhat extravagant and wild!

**Allegory.**<sup>1</sup>—An allegory is a narrative or description whose real meaning is different from its apparent meaning. Thus, in the 80th Psalm, we find the description of a vine, but the vine is so described that the reader soon perceives that the writer meant to have him think about a *nation*:

'Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt. Thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it. Thou preparedst room for it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it. Return, we beseech thee. O God of hosts, look down from Heaven, and behold and visit this vine.'

The greatest allegories in the English language are Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, in which the virtues and vices are made to act out, as persons, their nature, in a series of supposed adventures; and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, in which the spiritual progress of the Christian from this world to the next is represented by the story of a pilgrim in search of a distant country, which he reaches after many trials and struggles.

<sup>1</sup> From the Greek, meaning *what speaks another thing*.

Other fine examples are Chaucer's *House of Fame*, Addison's *Vision of Mirza*, Hawthorne's *Celestial Railroad*, and Poe's *Raven*, in the last of which the poet, or speaker, is represented as having lost his early love, Lenore (*innocence* or *purity*), and is visited by a raven (*remorse*). Allegory is the foundation of much emblematic art—notably of that famous series of pictures entitled 'The Voyage of Life.'

The *Parable* is a form of allegory in which some religious truth is exhibited by means of supposed facts from nature and human life.

The *Fable* is a short allegory in which animals and inanimate objects are endowed with human attributes, and are made to speak and act in such a way as to convey some useful lesson.

**Personification.**<sup>1</sup>—Personification is the ascription of human feeling and intelligence to irrational and inanimate objects. It is not enough that the object is endowed with life merely, as some rhetoricians state it,—it must have a *personal* life. Of this there are three degrees:

1. The lowest degree consists in ascribing some simple quality of persons to inanimate things; as, a *raging* tempest, a *pitiless* stone, a *furious* dart, a *smiling* morn. This form is produced by adjectives and pronouns.

2. A higher degree consists in ascribing to the object personal action, a form produced by verbs:

The bridegroom sea  
Is toying with the shore, his wedded bride;  
Retires a pace, to see how fair she looks,  
Then, proud, runs up to kiss her.—*Alexander Smith.*

3. The highest degree ascribes to the object the power of speech—

<sup>1</sup> From the Latin *persona*, person, and *facere*, to make.



Go, lovely rose,  
Tell her that wastes her time and me,  
That now she knows,  
When I resemble her to thee,  
How sweet and fair she seems to be.— *Waller*.

As the nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and verbs are transferred from their literal applications, this figure, like allegory, is of course based upon metaphor. Its force and beauty arise from its exhibiting lifeless things in human form, fancifully endowed with human feeling and purpose. To confer personal life upon an inanimate object is the surest means of awakening our love or hatred toward it, and the tendency to do it is natural to every period of life. The child vents his anger upon the stone against which he has stumbled; and an older person, who does not strike it, feels an impulse to blame it. The ancient Greek regarded all outward objects as instinct with life. Tree, stream, cloud, and star were believed to possess human sensibility and intelligence.

The figures thus far noticed may be regarded as the Figures of Diction; that is, they arise chiefly from the figurative application of *words*. The third degree of personification may, perhaps with greater propriety, be regarded as a Figure of Thought.

Figures of diction are sometimes called *tropes*.<sup>1</sup> The term *metaphor* is then limited to such figures as are based upon the one relation of *resemblance*; as, a *raging* tempest, meaning such a tempest as, *in its effects*, resembles a raging man. 'He *is* a lion' = he is *like* a lion. The designation of the figure is of little consequence, however. The important point to be remembered is, that the figurative use may at one time be based upon the relation of resemblance; at another, upon that of cause and effect, the

<sup>1</sup> There is no essential difference between the etymology of the *trope* and that of *metaphor*. Both indicate the turning of a word from its primary meaning.

whole and its parts, subject and attribute, genus and species, etc.

**Simile.**—A simile is an explicit statement of resemblance between two essentially different objects. Thus,

‘The soldiers stood like statues, unmoved by the cannon’s roar.’

Also,

‘In my spirit doth thy spirit shine,  
As shines the sunbeam in a drop of dew.’

In every such statement two parts are to be carefully distinguished — the object to be illustrated, and the illustrative object. The illustrative part — usually introduced by *like* or *as* — is regarded as the simile.

The student must not commit the error of thinking that every clause introduced by *as* or *like* is a simile. The objects compared must belong to different classes — must be dissimilar in their general nature. A comparison between two individuals of the same species (as between two persons) may afford an *example*, but cannot constitute a *simile*. Compare, ‘She is as short and dark as her brother,’ with ‘She is as short and dark as a mid-winter day.’ The fact of comparison must be the test, rather than the introductory *like* or *as*, which is not always expressed. Thus,

‘We have often thought that the public mind *resembles that of the sea when the tide is rising. Each successive wave rushes forward, breaks and rolls back; but the great flood is steadily coming on.*’

The simile becomes a metaphor when the resemblance is taken for granted — when one object is applied to the other *directly*. We no longer say, ‘He was *like* a fox in the council,’ but, ‘He *was* a fox in the council.’ A metaphor based upon resemblance is thus an implicit simile.

**Allusion.**—A historical or literary reference, more or less distinct. A thing supposed by the speaker to be well known to his hearers may be advantageously *alluded to*,

without being fully described. In the following, for instance, there is an allusion to the story of Jacob and the angel as related in the thirty-second chapter of *Genesis*:

Misery becomes as prosaic and familiar to me as my own health, but nevertheless I do not let go my idea, and will wrestle with the unknown angel, even should I halt upon my thigh.—*Goethe*.

The following is an exquisite illustration:

When I was a beggarly boy,  
And lived in a cellar damp,  
I had not a friend nor a toy,  
But I had Aladdin's lamp.  
When I could not sleep for cold,  
I had fire enough in my brain;  
And builded with roofs of gold  
My beautiful castles in Spain.—*Lowell*.

**Innuendo.**—Here the meaning is implied or insinuated, instead of being directly asserted. The figure is generally an obscure allusion to objects or facts that tend to depreciate the person or sentiment described:

All England, all America, joined in his applause. 'Hope elevated and joy brightened his crest.' I stood near him, and 'his face,' to use the expression of the Scripture of the first martyr, 'was as it had been the face of an angel.' I do not know how others feel, but if I had stood in that situation I never would have exchanged it for *all that kings in their profusion could bestow*.—*Burke*.

**Apostrophe.**<sup>1</sup>—An apostrophe is a digressive address:

You all did love him once not without cause;  
What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?  
*O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,*  
*And men have lost their reason.*—*Shakespeare*.

'That very night in which my son was born,  
My nurse, the only confidant I had,  
Set out with him to reach her sister's house.  
But nurse and infant have I never seen,

<sup>1</sup> From the Greek, meaning *a turning from*. The speaker turns suddenly from the current of thought, and, instead of speaking of an object, *addresses* it or some other object.

Nor heard of Anna since that fatal hour.  
*My murdered child! had thy fond mother feared*  
*The loss of thee, she had loud fame defied,*  
*Despised her father's rage, her father's grief,*  
*And wandered with thee through the scorning world.'*

From the first example, it appears that apostrophe may, as it frequently does, involve personification; from the second, that it may represent the absent and dead as present and living.

**Vision.**<sup>1</sup>—Vision is a representation of the past, future, or absent, as present:

*I seem to myself to behold* this city, the ornament of the earth and the capital of all nations, suddenly involved in one conflagration. *I see* before me the slaughtered heaps of citizens, lying unburied in the midst of their ruined country.—*Cicero*.

Notice, also, Byron's description of a storm in the Alps:

The sky *is* changed! and such a change! O night  
 And storm and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,  
 Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light  
 Of a dark eye in woman! Far along  
 From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,  
*Leaps* the live thunder, not from one lone cloud,  
 But every mountain *now hath found* a tongue,  
 And Jura *answers* from her misty shroud  
 Back to the joyous Alps, which *call* to her aloud.

The second example contains a variety of figures, and the pupil should be ever watchful for such intermixture in all examples. Thus, the first line, besides the vision and a figure yet to be defined (*exclamation*), begins an apostrophe. The second, third, and fourth lines contain not only apostrophe, but personification and simile. The sixth line contains vision and metaphor in one and the same word '*leaps*.' Lines 6–7 contain, besides vision, the first and second degrees of personification in '*live*,' '*tongue*,' '*her*,' and '*joyous*'; and the third degree in '*call*.'

<sup>1</sup> From the Latin *videre*, to see.

**Hyperbole.**<sup>1</sup>—Hyperbole is the enlargement of an object beyond its natural and proper dimensions:

Here once the embattled farmers stood,  
And fired the shot *heard round the world*.—*Emerson*.  
So frowned the mighty combatants that Hell  
*Grew darker at their frown*.—*Milton*.

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that *even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written*.—*St. John*. The object of this figure is to impress the mind strongly with the fact, by overstating the fact. 'Waves *mountain-high*' gives us a better idea of the effect of a storm at sea than the exact statement in feet and inches.

The *language* of the hyperbole may itself be literal (as in the examples given) or figurative. The true test is, not that the statement is literally untrue (which would be the case with all metaphors), but that the subject is *magnified*: as when a writer describes the carnage of a battle by '*rivers of blood and hills of slain*,' where the italicized words are both metaphorical and hyperbolic.

**Litotes.**—Precisely the reverse of Hyperbole. A form by which, in seeming to lessen, we actually increase the force of an expression:

And he *was not right fat*, I undertake.—*Chaucer*.

To thee I call,  
But with *no friendly voice*, and add thy name,  
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams.—*Milton*.

**Antithesis.**<sup>2</sup>—Antithesis is the union of opposites, to render unlike things more striking by contrast:

The *wicked* flee when no man pursueth | but the *righteous* are bold as a lion.—*Bible*.

Though sullied and dishonored | still divine;  
An heir of glory | a frail child of dust;

<sup>1</sup> From the Greek, meaning to *throw beyond*.

<sup>2</sup> From the Greek, meaning to *place against*.

Helpless | immortal | insect | infinite |  
 A worm | a God!—*Young*.

So in Tennyson's *Brook* —

Men may come and men may go |  
 But I go on *for ever*.

The idea of perpetuity—motion eternally in one direction—is emphasized by its opposite, the *coming* and *going*.

The force of this figure is founded upon a deep principle of human nature, by which ideas and objects are more pleasing and impressive when placed beside their opposites—as a white object appears whiter, and a black one blacker, if the white and black are placed side by side. Virtue appears fairer when contrasted with vice. A man at the base reveals best the vastness of an Egyptian pyramid. Darkness brings out the stars that were shining before unseen. The solemn stillness of the hour intensifies the report that ‘startles the dull night.’ The extremes of physical existence are best appreciated by placing the buoyancy of youth against the decrepitude of age; the season of bloom against the blight of frost. The flower were not so beautiful, did we not know that it must droop and wither:

The reed that waves along the river's brink,  
 Spearing its way into the summer air,  
 Is not so glorious as, when laid by winds,  
 It rests upon the mirror of the flood.—*Alford*.

**Epigram.**—This signified originally an inscription on a monument. It came next to mean a short poem. It is now made to embrace any brief, startling expression of thought. There is in it an element of contradiction, causing a shock of surprise, and thus conducing to effectiveness:

‘Conspicuous for its absence.’

‘The child is father to the man.’

By indignities men come to dignities.—*Bacon*.

Language is the art of concealing thought.—*Voltaire*.

'Riches empty the soul and the pocket: poverty replenishes both.'

**Climax.**<sup>1</sup>—Climax is the arrangement of ideas or thoughts in the ascending order of their importance. Thus in Cæsar's famous message to the Roman Senate—

'I came, I SAW, I CONQUERED.'

*Thou didst blow with thy wind; THE SEA COVERED THEM: THEY SANK LIKE LEAD IN THE MIGHTY WATERS.*—*Bible*.

The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,  
And, like an insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a wrack behind.—*Shakespeare*.

The ascending order of thought in this passage is seen in the words 'towers,' 'palaces,' 'temples'—this last the abode of gods. These images are succeeded by the 'globe itself,' and this by one of more vital interest to us—'all which it inherit.' These 'shall dissolve,' and, to complete the climax, shall vanish as utterly as the baseless fabric of a dream.

This figure owes its effect to the peculiar constitution of the mind. We demand that the subject shall increase in interest till the last. The stimulus that may easily excite pleasure at first, soon palls; and we must have something stronger, else the result is weariness. The principle involved is wide-reaching, and of great practical value to the composer—it applies not only to the sentence but to the entire composition—the paragraph, the essay, the sermon, the lecture, the drama, the book.

**Anticlimax.**—Anticlimax is the arrangement of ideas or thoughts in the descending order of their importance:

'Oh, dear! oh, dear! what shall I do?  
I've lost my wife and seed-corn, too!'

<sup>1</sup> From the Greek, meaning a *ladder*.

‘The king of France, with twice ten thousand men,  
Marched up the hill, and then — marched down again.’

This figure is not to be employed, of course, unless it is desired to depreciate the subject by covering it with ridicule.

**Interrogation.**—Interrogation is a statement thrown into the interrogative form for the purpose of giving it emphasis:

How long, O Catiline, will you abuse our patience?—*Cicero*.

Who would lose this intellectual being,  
Those thoughts that wander through eternity?—*Milton*.

Breathes there a man with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
This is my own, my native land?—*Scott*.

The power of this figure consists in arresting the attention by a personal appeal to the reader or hearer, which compels him to give answer to the question. The student should occasionally avail himself of this advantage in the work of composition. A new interest is imparted to the subject by suddenly turning the flow of narrative out of its course, as if to demand an answer.

**Exclamation.**—Exclamation is the expression of emotion:

O unexpected stroke, worse than death!—*Milton*.

Oh, for a lodge in some vast wilderness!—*Cowper*.

O my soul’s joy!

If after every tempest come such calms,

May the winds blow till they have wakened death!—*Shakespeare*.

‘Oh, what a revolution! and what a heart must I have to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall!’

The more *figurative* use of exclamation consists in its intentional employment to vary the style from the common order, to avoid monotony, or to emphasize a statement, as in the last two examples.

This figure, like each of the others, may be associated with other figures. Thus, in the third example, we have



personification in 'my soul's *joy*'; antithesis in 'tempest' and 'calms'—which words are also metaphorical; hyperbole in the last line, and, underlying it, metaphor in 'winds' and 'wakened.' The last example exhibits a marked antithesis in 'elevation' and 'fall.'

The figures, from Simile to Exclamation inclusive, may be regarded as Figures of Thought; that is, the figure in these cases consists in the turn of the sentence, or thought, rather than in the turn of the word, or idea. It is to be remembered, however, as has been copiously illustrated, that the two classes of figures—Figures of Diction and Figures of Thought—are often associated, and sometimes intermingled.

#### ORIGIN OF FIGURES.

**Necessity.**—Like other products of this world, human speech began as a little plant, growing slowly to the stature of the tree, with its buds and leaves and blossoms and fruit. Now this growth, more than to any other cause, is due to the use of words in new applications. These applications are two-fold:

1. When men see a strange object, they are not satisfied till they have heard its name. If it has none, as would happen in the first settlement of a country; or if its name is unknown, as might happen in importation from a foreign country, they proceed to give it one: and in doing so, the prevailing tendency, as has been observed from the earliest times, is to use the name of some *known* object nearly resembling the one to be named. To combine and re-apply old names is easier than to invent new ones; and wherever this is done, the result is a metaphor. Thus, the French, on the first introduction of the potato, called it 'the apple of the earth' (*pomme de terre*). Englishmen called the *anana* (its name in the East) 'pineapple'—a name suggested by the likeness of the

new fruit to the cone of the pine. Captain Erskine relates that in the Fiji Islands, man, dressed and prepared for food, is known as 'long pig'; human flesh and pork being the two staple articles of food, and the natural pig being the *shorter*. The New Zealanders called the first horses they saw, 'large dogs,' and the Highlanders styled their first donkey a 'large hare.' The Kaffirs called the parasol a 'cloud'—transferring to the new object a name belonging to one resembling it, somewhat, in figure and effect. Among the Malays, the sun is *mata-ari*—literally 'the eye of day'; the ankle is *mata-kaki*—'the eye of the foot'; and a key is 'child of a lock.' The Romans called the giraffe *camelopardus*, from its resemblance to the camel and leopard, and *ovis fera* (foreign sheep) from its resemblance to the latter in mildness of disposition. These transfers, it is seen, are made between one material substance and another.

2. Man's earliest words, like the child's, related, not to his soul, but to his body and to material objects. As he gradually advanced to consider and explain thinking, feeling, and willing, his own yearnings and passions, he could neither understand them himself nor make them intelligible to others, except by a reference to things which he could see or hear or taste or smell or touch—that is, by the use of his old terms in a new sense. The ideal, the spiritual, the mental, is, of itself, dim, shadowy, and unseen; and is incapable of being known at all but by a material image that shall make it in some sort visible, as a diagram illustrates a truth in Geometry.

Thus our 'soul'—German *seele*—is derived from the same root as the word 'sea.' The word 'reason' is supposed to be connected with the Greek *rheo*, 'I flow.' 'Consider,' from the Latin *considerare*, means to fix the eyes on the stars; 'deliberate,' from *deliberare*, to weigh.

The Greek for the soul of man means 'wind'; and the Hebrew, 'breath.'

Again, the spirit, its desires and emotions, are named from the various parts of the body in which they were once believed to reside. In Hebrew, the mind and understanding are named from the heart, the liver, and the kidneys. 'The bowels' signifies mercy; 'the flesh,' lust; 'the nose,' anger—'long of nose,' patient, 'short of nose,' irritable. In Greek, the diaphragm is used for the understanding; the liver, for feeling; the nostrils, for contempt; the stomach and the bile, for anger; the breast, for courage. In Latin, the nostrils are applied to taste and refinement; the nose, to satire; the eyebrow, to disdain; the throat, to gluttony. Similarly, we use the blood for passion ('young blood'), the phlegm for dulness, the spleen for envy. '*Sanguine* hopes' means literally bloody hopes, and 'a *melancholy* man' means properly a man whose bile is black.

Some of the metaphors in use among savage races are highly picturesque. The Kaffirs denote great dexterity by 'flying ant'; a dependant by *inja*, 'dog'; death by *quanka*, 'to be snapped asunder'; pride by 'to eat one's self.' The Malays signify affront by 'charcoal on the face'; malice by 'rust of the heart'; impudence by 'face of board'; sincerity by 'white heart.'

Scarcely less ingenious are the metaphors of the Chinese. Capriciousness is expressed by 'three mornings—four evenings'; cunning speech by 'convenient hind-teeth'; persuasive speech by 'convenient front-teeth'; disagreement by 'you east—I west.'

**Utility.**—If figures are a necessity, it is needless to add—except, perhaps, to emphasize it—that they are in a high degree serviceable. This, indeed, has been said and insisted upon repeatedly, and is copiously illustrated by the examples. Their preëminent value appears in the

conveyance of moral and religious instruction; for things of a spiritual nature, as observed above, cannot be conceived except by borrowing our notions of them from things visible or familiar to the senses. In adapting such instruction to simple understandings, whose words are few and of material import, the more striking the figure, the more impressive the lesson; for the figure communicates an *idea* by an *image*—gives to the thought a *shape*. This consideration, coupled with the paucity of words in the Hebrew language, accounts largely for the extensive use of figures by the sacred writers. Iniquity, or guilt, is expressed pictorially by ‘a spotted garment’; vain pursuits, by ‘feeding on ashes’; a sinful life, by ‘a crooked path’; misery, by ‘drinking the cup of astonishment’; prosperity, by ‘the candle of the Lord shining on our head.’ ‘In the book of Job,’ says Renan, ‘God puts sins in a sack, seals it, and flings it behind his back’—all which means to forget. Christ is ‘the true vine,’ ‘the branch,’ ‘the Lamb that was slain,’ ‘the Lion of the tribe of Judah.’

The point here to be distinctly noticed is, that figures not only express thought that plain language cannot express, but in other instances, express thought more forcibly than literal language can express it. Consider, also, the following:

‘The news was a *dagger* to his heart.’

‘Canst thou minister unto a mind *diseased* —  
*Pluck* from the heart a *rooted* sorrow?’

A fine lady is a *squirrel-headed* thing, with small airs and small notions about as applicable to the business of life as a *pair of tweezers* to the clearing of a forest.—George Eliot.

What point and force does Macaulay give to his plea for thorough study by the use of the following simile!

‘Rumford, it is said, proposed to the Elector of Bavaria a scheme for feeding his soldiers at a much cheaper rate than formerly. His

plan was simply to compel them to masticate their food thoroughly. A small quantity thus eaten would, according to that famous projector, afford more sustenance than a large meal hastily devoured. I do not know how Rumford's proposition was received; but to the mind, I believe it will be found more nutritious to digest a page than to devour a volume.'

**Pleasure.**—Again, figures may be employed not to explain or enforce a thought, but to adorn it, though it may be doubted whether a thought can ever be adorned without also being rendered more effective for the purpose in hand. As ornament, they are the bright gems in the rough rock, the foliage and bloom of thought. They charm us by the delightful visions which they present to our imagination. Without them, thought would be spiritless and impoverished, as would be our minds without taste, fancy, and affection. The following are rich in imaginative beauty:

'Full many a glorious morning have I seen  
*Flatter* the mountain tops with *sovereign eye*,  
*Kissing* with *golden face* the meadows green.'

I've dreamed of sunsets when the sun supine  
*Lay rocking* on the ocean *like a god*,  
And threw his *weary arms* far up the sky,  
And with *vermilion-tinted fingers*  
Toy'd with the *tresses* of the evening star.—*Holland*.

Now morn, her *rosy steps* in the eastern clime  
Advancing, *sow'd* the earth with *orient pearl*.—*Milton*.

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers  
From the seas and the streams;  
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
In their noon-day dreams.  
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken  
The sweet buds every one,  
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,  
As she dances about the sun.  
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
And whiten the green plains under,

And then again I dissolve in rain,  
And laugh as I pass in thunder.—*Shelley*.

Most frequently, figures are of a mixed nature — both instructive and ornamental. Some are more eminently so than others. Of this character, for example, are the incomparable lines of Shelley, the most pictorial of poets:

Life, like a dome of many-colour'd glass,  
Stains the white radiance of eternity.

It thus appears that figures are used in the first instance from necessity, and are multiplied on account of their utility and beauty. More briefly, the origin and multiplication of figures depend upon necessity and choice. They were a necessity before they were a luxury — as the chase was a business before it was an amusement — as furs were put on for use before they were worn for ornament.

#### ADVANTAGES OF FIGURES.

The student should now be amply prepared to receive intelligently the following statements, which are little more than a summary of results:

1. *Figures make language more copious.* For when the same word is applied successively to different objects, the effect is similar to adding so many new words to the language. Thus —

'The *tide* (of the ocean) is rising' . . . . . Literal.

'What a *tide* of woes comes rushing on this land!'

'The *tide* of blood in me hath proudly flowed in vanity.'

'There is a *tide* in the affairs of men.'

'The noblest man in the *tide* of times.'

} Figurative.

2. *They give variety to language.* Mark the several ways in which the shining of the sun is represented —

'And all his splendor floods the towered walls.'

'Sow'd the earth with orient pearl.'

- ‘With rosy fingers unbarr’d the gates of light.’
- ‘Each purple peak, each flinty spire  
Was bathed in floods of living fire.’
- ‘A dazzling deluge reigns.’
- ‘The western waves of ebbing day  
Roll’d o’er the glen their level way.’
- ‘The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,  
And his burning plumes outspread.’
- ‘But yonder comes the powerful king of day  
Rejoicing in the east.’

3. *They give new beauty to language.* This statement needs no further illustration.

4. *They give impressiveness to language,* by presenting the object of thought in a clearer and more striking view than literal terms could give. The following, among innumerable instances, will serve to illustrate —

- ‘As night to stars, woe lustre gives to man.’
- ‘I’ll use you for my mirth when you are *waspish*.’
- ‘Thoughts rush *in stormy darkness* through the soul.’
- ‘It broke the *Sabbath* stillness round.’
- ‘You say that Ireland is a *millstone about our necks*.’
- ‘A heart *boiling* with passion will always send up *infatuating fumes* to the head.’

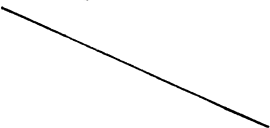
5. *They give elevation and dignity to thought* when used judiciously. Compare,

- ‘Thou’rt *purpling* now, *O Sun*, the vines of Canaan,  
And *crowning with rich light* the cedar tops of Lebanon,’
- with

‘The sun is shining on the vines of Canaan and the cedar tops of Lebanon.’

6. *They condense thought,* enabling us to express much in little. This is seen whenever we attempt to render figurative terms into plain ones—the result is a multiplication of words. We recall the ingenious device of a

student in examination, who, required to sketch the movement of the Drama from Shakespeare to Dryden, accomplished by a single stroke of his pen what others had labored through several paragraphs to do —



which expressed, with even increased distinctness, *decline*, leaving to the imagination the pleasure of reading his symbol. Not unlike this—which, indeed, was a metaphorical use of the line—is the effect of metaphor. For example, consider Beecher's striking sentence, embodying his complete idea in a figure so expressive, so exact, so transparent, that behind the figure we perceive all the details of the idea, like liquor in a crystal vase —

‘Prayer is the *key* of the morning and the *bolt* of the night.’

Also, the following description of Chaucer's vast and varied resources of mind and character, which concentrates into a single sentence of splendid symbols the contents of several pages:

Chaucer is like a jeweler with his hands full; pearls and glass beads, sparkling diamonds and common agates, black jet and ruby roses, all that history and imagination had been able to gather and fashion during three centuries in the East, in France, in Wales, in Provence, in Italy, all that had rolled his way, clashed together, broken or polished by the stream of centuries, and by the great jumble of human memory; he holds in his hand, arranges it, composes therefrom a long sparkling ornament, with twenty pendants, a thousand facets, which by the splendor, varieties, contrasts, may attract and satisfy the eyes of those most greedy for amusement and novelty.—*Taine*.

7. *They afford pleasure by presenting two objects in one view.* For illustrations, the reader is referred to the examples under 2 and 4. We see, says Aristotle, one thing in another—the idea in the image.



8. *They enable us to express delicate distinctions in the objects of thought.* The experiment of converting the figurative into literal terms, that shall express with equal vividness the precise meaning, will render the advantage of the following apparent:

‘The light *struggles dimly* through windows darkened by dust.’

So in Spenser’s description of the palace of Morpheus:<sup>1</sup>

‘Both rooffe, and floore, and walls were all of gold,  
 But overgrowne with dust and old decay,  
 And hid in darkness, that none could behold  
 The hew thereof; for vew of chereful day  
 Did never in that House itself display,  
 But a faint shadow of uncertein light;  
 Such as a lamp whose life doth fade away;  
 Or as the moone, cloathed with clowdy light  
 Does show to him that walkes in feare and sad affright.’

#### EVANESCENCE OF FIGURES.

In the flow of centuries, the original meaning of many words is lost. True, it is there—embalmed; and the scholar often brings it back to light, but it knows no resurrection into the consciousness of the people. Words that were originally figures, assume the nature of literal terms by merely becoming familiar, so that language may be regarded as a collection of faded metaphors.

Thus ‘spirit’ once signified *the breath*, a material, though extremely attenuated, substance; but now our immaterial, imperishable part. ‘Man’ in the Anglo-Saxon original meant *sin*, or the *sinful*; ‘God,’ *good*, or the *Good*. We speak of a ‘dunce,’ without reference to *Duns* Scotus, the keenest and most subtle-witted of men, but the teacher of scholastic mysticism: of ‘sauntering,’ without reference to the Holy Land; for the word is derived from the custom of idle people roving about the

<sup>1</sup> The god of dreams or sleep.

country in the Middle Ages and asking charity, under pretence of going *a la Sainte Terre*, to the Holy Land, till the children exclaimed, 'There goes a *sainte-terror!*'—a *saunterer*, a Holy Lander. We speak of a 'sardonic' smile, without reference to a plant growing in Sardinia, which is said to have caused those who ate of it to die of laughing: of a 'jovial' person, without reference to the pagan deity under whose joyful star, Jupiter or *Jove*, it was of happiest augury to be born: of an 'atlas,' without reference to the demi-god, *Atlas*, who upheld the world: of a 'volcano,' without reference to *Vulcan*, the god of the fire and the forge: of the days of the week, without reference to the gods our Saxon forefathers worshipped in the forests of Germany—

Sunday	(sacred to the Sun)	= <i>Sun's day</i> ;
Monday	(sacred to the Moon)	= <i>Moon's day</i> ;
Tuesday	(sacred to Tuisco)	= <i>Tuisco's day</i> ;
Wednesday	(sacred to Wodin)	= <i>Wodin's day</i> ;
Thursday	(sacred to Thor)	= <i>Thor's day</i> ;
Friday	(sacred to Freya)	= <i>Freya's day</i> ;
Saturday	(sacred to Sæter)	= <i>Sæter's day</i> .

We recognize no metaphor when we hear a person speak, in ordinary conversation, of a 'sweet voice,' a 'sweet look,' a 'sweet feeling'; of 'bitter cold,' 'bitter satire,' 'bitter experience'; of a 'glorious concert'; of 'delicate odors,' or 'delicate sensibilities.' The proper names Long, Short, Smalley, Strong, Armstrong, Longfellow, Swift, Hardy, Sweet, Moody, Gray, Russell (red), no longer recall their humble origin as names of personal qualities. 'Stella' or 'Esther' is not for us *the star*; nor 'Margaret' *the pearl*; nor 'Susanna' *the lily*; nor 'Stephen' *the crown*; nor 'Albert' *the all-bright*; nor 'Daisy' *the eye of day*, or *day's eye*—

That well by reason it men callen may  
The *daisie*, or else the *eye of day*.—*Chaucer*.

'Right' means *straight*; 'wrong' means *twisted*; 'transgression,' the *crossing of a line*; 'supercilious,' the *raising of the eyebrows*; 'subject,' something *placed underneath*, as a *mat* to stand upon.

Other examples of faded metaphors are reflect (as a mirror *throws back* the rays of light), educate, sincere, remark, conclude, attention, design, essay, desultory, atonement,<sup>1</sup> impress, and others innumerable, borrowed from sensible things and appropriated to spiritual nature.

Figures (metaphors), then, far from being the product of an advanced culture, are, as we have seen, the wheels by which language moves, the wings by which it soars. The bulk of human speech consists of terms originally figurative, which from frequency and multiplicity of use have come to be regarded as literal. Indeed, how many words (as instanced above), transferred from foreign languages into ours, have never been used in their literal sense at all in the English language. 'As the limestone of the continent consists of infinite masses of the shells of animalcules, so language is made up of images, or tropes, which now, in their secondary use, have long since ceased to remind us of their poetic origin.'<sup>2</sup> 'What is commonly called figurative language is *new coin*, or what retains all the distinctness and boldness of the original impress; literal language is *old coin* with the image or signature worn out by passing through many hands.'

May we not now understand that language incarnates thought? that the proper study of language is therefore the study of thought? that in the common use of words we talk poetry without suspecting it? that a full history of words would be a history of the human race?

<sup>1</sup> And lyke as he made the Jewes and the gentiles *at one* be-twene themselves, even so he made them both *at one* with God, that there should be nothing to break the *at-onement*. but that the thynges in earth should be joyned together, as it were, into *one* body.—*Vul.*

<sup>2</sup> Emerson.      <sup>3</sup> Gilchrist.

## PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS.

As those expressions commonly considered literal are in general merely worn-out or *mummified* metaphors, it is impossible to draw the boundary between literal and figurative terms with precision. To attempt it is an abuse of criticism, and a principal cause why 'Ten censure wrong for one who writes amiss.' Not to reproduce the multitudinous rules of the classic ceremonial, most of which entangle the weak and are ignored by the strong, it may be suggested, as evident to any one of ordinary breadth of mind—

(1) That the figure should be appropriate to the subject.

(2) That the figure should be adapted to the general understanding.

(3) That figures should not be so multiplied as to produce weariness, or so intermixed as to produce confusion.

(4) That, in a given period, the images which they introduce should not be *obviously* incompatible.

If the analysis of an example is not evident at sight, consider first whether the example contains a figure of thought. Is it interrogation? If not, is it exclamation? If not, is it climax or antithesis? To answer these separate questions, there must be in the mind a *distinct picture* of the figure proposed.

Consider, second, whether the example may contain a figure of diction. You will here inquire whether a word is used with a variation of form, office, or syntax merely, or in a sense not literal. If it then appears that a given word is used with a transfer of *meaning*, you will give it the generic name of metaphor, adding its specific name, if it has one. Is it metonymy? If not, is it personification? If so, which degree? etc.

Sometimes the figure may be detected more easily by

viewing the example as a whole, or in outline; as in irony and the third degree of personification, where the figure depends quite as much on the pervading thought as on the idea of a particular word.

Again, it may be advisable to restrict the view, and inspect, slowly and carefully, one line at a time. Perhaps not infrequently it will be found expedient to employ, in turn, both modes of procedure.

You can never analyze an example by a prolonged stare. *Think*, and think by *method*. There must be in your mind's eye standards of comparison by which to judge and classify, and these standards are no other than the definitions with their typical illustrations.

## EXERCISES.

### I.

Most of the following contain figures — some do not. Indicate the figurative parts, without naming them, carefully discriminating, where required, (1) the literal meaning of the word, (2) the intended or figurative meaning, (3) the association between the two, (4) the *source* or *basis* of association. Thus:

1. 'The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.'

*Literal*: The sun shines without effect upon the blind, because the proper sense is wanting.

*Intended*: The effect of sin, corrupting the heart and clouding the judgment, is insensibility to spiritual instruction.

*Association*: Similitude, or resemblance. The spiritually blind are insensible to the Divine teachings, as the physically blind are insensible to the light of the sun.

*Basis*: The analogy between matter and spirit.

2. 'Give us this day our daily bread.'

*Literal*: A species of food made of flour or meal.

*Intended*: Food in general.

*Association*: Relation between the whole and a part, or between the genus and a species.

*Basis*: Analogy between one material substance and another.

3. 'Streaming grief his faded cheek bedewed.'

*Literal*: Mental distress.

*Intended*: Tears — effect of grief.

*Association*: Relation between cause and effect.

*Basis*: Analogy between spirit and matter.

4. 'It was a brilliant thought.'

*Literal*: A glittering or lustrous appearance.

*Intended*: A thought of unusual excellence or merit.

*Association*: Similitude — resemblance between their effects.

*Basis*: Analogy between matter and spirit.

5. 'Man! Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear.'

*Literal*: A body suspended from a fixed point and swinging to and fro between limits, as the pendulum of a clock.

*Intended*: Man's life is full of contrasted experiences, alternately happy and sorrowful.

*Association*: Resemblance.

*Basis*: Analogy between matter and spirit.

6. A sunny disposition. 7. A flashy character. 8. Hazy thoughts.  
 9. Unclouded hopes. 10. Starless despair. 11. Rosy-fingered morn.  
 12. Wheeling planets. 13. The natural world. 14. Golden clouds.  
 15. A gorgeous sunset. 16. Ruffled spirits. 17. Checkered life.  
 18. The very head and front of my offending. 19. I will run in  
 the way of thy commandments. 20. Joy brightened his soul. 21.  
 It cannot be wondered at, considering the greenness of his years.  
 22. The swan gives out his snowy plumage to the gale. 23. Time  
 had worn deep furrows in his face. 24. No beauty beaming on his  
 clouded mind. 25. O thou, who sweetly bendst my stubborn will.  
 26. He almost sank beneath the iron arm of war. 27. Virtue is a  
 jewel. 28. That the earth is a sphere is easily proved. 29. Thy  
 word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. 30. Groans are  
 the flowers plucked from the tree of anguish. 31. A green memory.  
 32. Satan is a roaring lion. 33. She was the favorite lamb of his little  
 flock. 34. My advent'rous song. 35. The pilot steers the fearless  
 ship. 36. Shapeless age brings thy father to his drooping chair.  
 37. My soul is melted because of trouble. 38. But sent leanness  
 into their souls. 39. The artist commenced with a soft streamy  
 note of celestial quality; and with three or four whips of his bow

elicited points of sound as bright as stars. 40. Teachers are the parents of the mind.

## II.

Introduce figurative language into the following. In doing so, endeavor to call to mind other objects and ideas related in some way to the ones proposed for the exercise. Thus:

*Plain.**Figurative.*

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. The earth is dry          | = The earth <i>thirsts</i> .             |
| 2. Avoid intoxicating drinks | = <i>Flee</i> from the bottle.           |
| 3. Sorrow saddens the heart  | = Sorrow is a <i>cloud</i> on the heart. |
| 4. The lake was still        | = The lake was <i>asleep</i> .           |
| 5. He was brave              | = He was a <i>lion</i> .                 |
| 6. Old age                   | = The <i>sunset</i> of life.             |

7. He was number one in his class. (*Head*.) 8. Misfortunes soon pass away. (*Clouds*.) 9. The beauty of that fair face is wasted. (*Bloom*.) 10. Can old age make folly venerable? (*Gray hairs*.) 11. Confusion on thy soldiers wait. (*Banners*.) 12. The sound of the thunder is echoed from peak to peak. (*Leaps*.) 13. He is greatly afflicted. (*Has laid her hand heavily*.) 14. He sank in the ocean. (*Swallowed*.) 15. The waters made a pleasant noise among the rocks. (*Danced merrily*.) 16. A poor peasant who had never been educated. (*Ignorance, lap, nursed*.) 17. He was invisible, owing to the darkness of the night. (*Hidden, shadows; or, shrouded, dark mantle*.) 18. Thou must pass many years in this world, where wise men may suffer difficulties and hardships, and foolish persons must find trouble. (*Sea, long voyage, shipwreck*.) 19. The sun shines on the mountain tops. (*Gilds*.) 20. I fear his honesty is a—of recent growth. 21. Sorrow like—*darkens* the soul. 22. The wind is—. 23. The—message. 24. The—desire. 25. The—policy of the administration. 26. His ambition—. 27. The music was—. (Let the predicate be a symbol of some smell, taste, or touch, as also in the two following.) 28. Praise—. 29. The—heart. 30. His purpose—; but his execution—. (Let the predicate be a symbol of motion.) 31. The good man enjoys comfort in the midst of adversity. (*Light, darkness*.) 32. Fortune, though it may involve us in temporal difficulties, cannot make us permanently unhappy, if we do no evil.

## III.

Point out and name the various figures in the following extracts:

1. Destruction and Death say, 'We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.'—*Bible*.

2. Procrastination is the thief of time.—*Young*.

3. All experience is an arch wherethrough  
Gleams that untravelled world, whose margin fades  
Forever and forever as I move.—*Tennyson*.

4. Where are the bodies of the lost ones over whom the melancholy waves alone have been chanting requiem? What shrouds were wrapped round the limbs of beauty, and of manhood, and of placid infancy, when they were laid on the dark floor of the secret tomb?—*Greenwood*.

5. Like leaves on trees, the race of man is found,  
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground,  
Another race the following spring supplies;  
They fall successive, and successive rise;  
So generations in their course decay;  
So flourish these, when those are past away.—*Shelley*.  
(Simile, Antithesis, Metaphor.)

6. A tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use.—*Irving*.

7. Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?—*Bible*.

8. Intemperance dethrones man's reason, and hides her bright beams in the mystic clouds that roll around the shattered temple of the human soul, curtained with midnight.—*Gough*.

9. As immediately after looking at the sun we cannot perceive the light of a fire, while by looking at the fire first and the sun afterwards we can perceive both; so, after receiving a brilliant, or weighty, or terrible thought, we cannot appreciate a less brilliant, less weighty, or less terrible one, while, by reversing the order, we can appreciate each.—*Spencer*.

(Simile, Antithesis, Metaphor, Climax.)

10. If the flights of Dryden, therefore, are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and constant.—*Dr. Johnson*.



11. Malicious envy rode  
 Upon a ravenous wolf, and still did chaw  
 Between his cankered teeth a venomous tode,  
 That all the poison ran about his jaw.  
 All in a kirtle of discoloured say  
 He clothed was ypaynted full of eies,  
 And in his bosom secretly there lay  
 An hateful snake, the which his taile uptyes  
 In many folds, and mortall sting implyes.—*Spenser.*

12. In mortals, there is a care for trifles which proceeds from love and conscience, and is most base. And so, also, there is a gravity proceeding from thought, which is most noble; and a gravity proceeding from dulness and mere incapability of enjoyment, which is most base.—*Ruskin.*

13. You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!  
 O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,  
 Know you not Pompey?—*Shakespeare*  
 (Five different figures, two of which are Climax and Hyperbole.)

14. The accomplished orator treads the stage and holds in his hand the audience, hour after hour, descanting on the nation's fate, the nation's duty. Men look up and say how easy it is, that it is very wonderful, and how fortunate it is to be born with such a power. But behind every little point of accomplishment there is a great beam of endeavor and toil that reaches back from the man's manhood, to his earliest youth.—*Theodore Parker.*

15. The Soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,  
 Lets in new light thro' chinks that time has made.  
 Stronger by weakness, wiser men become  
 As they draw near their eternal home.  
 Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view  
 That stand upon the threshold of the new.—*Goethe.*  
 (Antithetical and highly Metaphorical, with Climax.)

16. They fall away like the flower on which the sun looks in his strength, when the mildew has passed over it, and its head is heavy with the drops of the night.—*Ossian.*

17. 'The soul of man is like the rolling world,  
 One-half in day, the other dipt in night.'

18. I have seen men who, at the marriage altar, thought they were annexing something more valuable than Cuba, who found out afterward that they had got only an album, Godey's Magazine, and a medicine chest.—*Talmage*.

19. So far her voice flow'd on, like timorous brook  
That, lingering along a pebbled coast,  
Doth fear to meet the sea.—*Keats*.

20. Who saw the narrow sunbeam that came out of the South and smote upon their summits until they melted and mouldered away in a dust of blue rain? Who saw the dance of the dead clouds when the sunlight left them last night, and the west wind blew them before it like withered leaves?—*Ruskin*.

21. On parent knees a naked, new-born child,  
Weeping thou sat'st, while all around thee smiled;  
So live, that sinking in the last long sleep,  
Thou then may'st smile, while all around thee weep.  
—*Sir W. Jones*.

22. Consult the following passages: Isa. v, 1-7; 2 Sam. xii, 1-4; Judges ix, 7-15.

23. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?—*St. Paul*.

24. Once on a time all the members of the body revolted against the Belly, because it received everything and contributed nothing. So the Hand said it would no longer carry food to the Mouth; the Mouth said it would no longer receive it; and the Teeth said they would no longer chew it. They all declared they would no longer slave as they had done for the lazy and ungrateful Belly. So they rose in insurrection; but, lo! while the rebellious members sought to punish the Belly, they languished and punished themselves.<sup>1</sup>—*Menenius Agrippa*.

25. He, above the rest  
In shape and gesture, proudly eminent  
Stood like a tower: his form had not yet lost

<sup>1</sup> Said to have been related to the people, who were in rebellion against the Patricians.

All her original brightness, nor appear'd  
 Less than archangel ruin'd and the excess  
 Of glory obscur'd: as when the sun, new risen,  
 Looks through the horizontal misty air,  
 Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon  
 In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds  
 On half the nations, and with fear of change  
 Perplexes monarchs.—*Milton.*

26. What kind of stone has been most sought for? The philosopher's stone. Has it ever been found? Yes; frequently. Where? In a hat. From what does it proceed? Quartz. Where does granite lie? In beds. What is a stratum? A layer of anything. Can you mention any? Yes; a hen. Mention another. A ship; she lays to (too). What is a flint? A miser's heart. Can you break it? Yes. How? Open his chest.

27. The circumstances now clearly in evidence spread out the whole scene before us. Deep sleep had fallen on the destined victim, and all beneath his roof. A healthful old man, to whom sleep was sweet,—the first sound slumbers of the night held him in their strong embrace. The assassin enters, through the window already prepared, into an unoccupied apartment. With noiseless foot he paces the lonely hall . . . he winds up the ascent of the stairs and reaches the door of the chamber. Of this he moves the lock by soft, continued pressure, till it turns on its hinges without noise, and he enters and beholds his victim before him. . . . The deed is done. He retreats, retraces his steps to the window, passes out through it as he came in, and escapes.—*Webster.*

28. Thine eyes are springs, in whose serene  
 And silent waters heaven is seen;  
 Their lashes are the herbs that look  
 On their young figures in the brook.—*Bryant.*

29. Take those lips away  
 Which so sweetly were foresworn;  
 And those eyes—the break of day—  
 Lights that do mislead the morn.—*Shakespeare.*

30. It is therefore death alone that can suddenly make man to know himself. He tells the proud and insolent that they are but objects, and humbles them at the instant, makes them cry, complain, and repent, yea, even to hate their forepassed happiness. He takes the

account of the rich, and proves him a beggar, a naked beggar, which hath interest in nothing but in the gravel that fills his mouth. He holds a glass before the eyes of the most beautiful, and makes them see therein their deformity and rottenness, and they acknowledge it.

O eloquent, just, and mighty Death ! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded ; . . . what none hath dared, thou hast done ; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised ; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *hic jacet!*—*Sir Walter Raleigh.*

31. Poor man ! I know he would not be a wolf,  
But that he sees the Romans are but sheep ;  
He were no lion, were not Romans hinds ;  
Those that with haste will make a mighty fire  
Begin it with weak straws ; what trash is Rome,  
What rubbish, and what offal, when it serves  
For the base matter to illuminate  
So vile a thing as Cæsar ! But, O grief !  
Where hast thou led me?—*Shakespeare.*

32. As the vine which has long twined its graceful foliage about the oak, and been lifted by it into sunshine, will, when the hardy plant is rifted by the thunderbolt, cling round with its caressing tendrils, and bind up its shattered boughs ; so it is beautifully ordained by Providence that woman, who is the dependent and ornament of man in his happier hours, should be his stay and solace when smitten with sudden calamity ; winding herself into the rugged recesses of his nature, tenderly supporting the drooping head, and binding up the broken heart.—*Irving.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### METHODS OF EXPRESSION — PERSPICUITY.

All that trains the mind to severe thinking, and the heart to right feeling, prepares the way for perspicuous utterance.—DR. BASCOM.

**P**ERSPICUITY, from the Latin *perspicio*, means, etymologically, capable of *being seen through*. Rhetorically, it is the use of such words, phrases, and sentences, as will convey our ideas to others clearly and readily.

It will appear at once that this is the principal quality of expression. Language that is not intelligible, or not easily so, fails, proportionately, of the end for which language is employed. So far as the attention is absorbed by the medium of communication, so far is it withdrawn from the thought communicated. To be compelled to follow a writer with care, to pause, and to re-read, in order to comprehend his meaning, is to ordinary minds displeasing. 'Discourse,' says Quintilian, 'ought always to be obvious, so that the sense shall enter the mind as sunlight the eyes, even though they are not directed upwards to the source.' We should take pains not only that the meaning *may* be understood, but that it *must* be understood.

It is equally evident that perspicuity is relative rather than absolute. It is determined, not so much by the nature of subjects treated, as by the power of persons addressed. What is clear to one individual or class, may be obscure to another. The mental capacity of those to be instructed, pleased, or persuaded, must furnish the guide and law of composition. Upon the immature and illiter-

ate, many of the choicest sentiments of an Addison or an Irving would be lost. A scientific treatise may be admirably clear to scientists, or to those acquainted with the elements of the particular science, but utterly unintelligible, however skilfully presented, to such as have not the requisite attainments. To be intelligible to all would be impossible. Perspicuity demands only that the inherent difficulty of a theme should not be increased by the mode of presenting it, and that time and attention should not be needlessly consumed in overcoming difficulties of expression. We are herewith to consider the chief conditions upon which this result depends.

**Purity.**—If a writer or speaker of to-day should say, ‘He plunged in *for to* save her life,’ it would be objected at once that ‘for’ is now never joined to the infinitive with correctness. If it were asked on what authority this assertion is made, the answer would be that such a combination does not occur in the writings of those who are reputed good authors in the English language. Were it rejoined that the expression may be found in Shakespeare, as—

Let your highness

Lay a more noble thought upon mine honor

Than *for to* think that I would sink it here,

the reply would be that this does not authorize its use at the present time. In writing or speaking we are bound to employ the signs or symbols which are prevalent, just as in buying or selling we must adopt the form of money that is circulating—not that which was current two hundred years ago, and which has been withdrawn from circulation. If it be asserted that the phrase may be found in some newspaper, or is used in a particular neighborhood or by a particular class, it would be replied that a phrase is not made a part of the English language, and therefore generally intelligible, simply by the example of

one person, even though esteemed a good writer, nor by that of a district, trade, or profession. Instead of seeking for illustrative passages in proof or disproof of the point in question, we may appeal to a dictionary, a work compiled by the method here indicated—by a careful examination of words as used by authors of reputation.

From these statements we learn that a form of expression admitted into an English composition should be familiar to the great body of intelligent people in English-speaking countries. It should have the sanction (1) of *reputable* use, as opposed to what is vulgar, partial, or limited; (2) of *national* use, as opposed to what is foreign, provincial, or professional; (3) of *present* use, as opposed to what is ancient or obsolete. If it conforms to these requirements—if it accords with the uniform, or preponderant, practice of recent reputable speakers and writers, it is said to be *pure*. Purity may hence be defined as the use of such words and such constructions as belong to the language employed, in its existing state, without reference to class, occupation, or abode. Purity is violated:

(1) By the use of obsolete words—words which, once familiar, have ceased to be current in good prose literature or in common conversation. Language changes perpetually, and words will inevitably go out of fashion. The task of recalling them is committed mainly to poets. Sometimes it is the meaning or function, not the word, that is obsolete, as in Shakespeare's use of *by* in the sense of *about*, *concerning*:

Tell me, sirrah, but tell me true, I charge you,  
By him and by this woman here what know you?

(2) By the use of unauthorized neologisms—words which, formed by composition and derivation from native or foreign materials, have not received the sanction of genius, or the consent of the world of letters. So long as

English possesses vitality, it will continue to absorb new words, in spite of objection. They should, however, as the condition of legitimacy, denote a conception not adequately expressed by some native or naturalized term, and should be at once intelligible to those for whom they are designed. 'Not every person,' says Dryden, 'is fit to innovate.' Let the masters give the law and determine the practice. Others can follow no better counsel than that of Pope:

In words as fashions the same rule will hold,  
Alike fantastic if too new or old;  
Be not the first by whom the new are tried,  
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

(3) By the use of alienisms—foreign words and constructions which express no thought nor shade of thought that is not expressed equally well or better by current phraseology. In the seventeenth century the employment of Latin and Greek was profuse. The present fashion is French. Most of us can recall the vexation of attempting to read the patchwork performance of some French-loving pedant. For illustration we need only glance into a fashionable periodical, or into a novel of the day. 'Heroes are always marked by an air *distingué*; vile men are sure to be *blasés*; lady friends never merely dance or dress well, they dance or dress *à merveille*. . . . All the people belong to the *beau monde*, as may be seen at a *coup d'œil*.'

(4) By the use of provincialisms—words and phrases peculiar to a district of country or section of people. Thus, recently a judge in California was puzzled by the phrase of a witness who deposed that he had seen in the plaintiff's field 'a right smart chance' of hogs. Upon inquiry it was learned that in the vernacular of the place 'a right smart chance' meant fourteen, and the jury was so charged. A widely extended language must, it



is evident, have a partially divided use, forms gaining currency at one point which are unrecognized at another. As nearly as possible, our vocabulary should be of the common stock, intelligible to Englishmen on either side of the Atlantic.

(5) By the use of vulgarisms — words and phrases, whether colloquialisms or slang, which are suggestive of what is low and mean. Originating in heedless conversation, and there tolerated, they are expelled from dignified address as the scum of expression. As a rule, they are ephemeral. Occasionally one is adopted by respectable usage.

(1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) are usually called *barbarisms*. Another and grave offence against purity is the *solecism* — a violation of the laws of syntax. These laws express the principles by which, according to established usage, words are combined into sentences. The chief of them it is our purpose to point out and illustrate:

(1) The subject of a finite verb, when capable of inflectional change, should be in the nominative case:

I have no other saint than *thou* [art] to pray to.—*Longfellow*.

Elizabeth publicly threatened that she would have the head of *whoecer* had advised it.—*Hume*.

Confusion of the oblique case of pronouns and the nominative is widely diffused in the popular speech; nor are specimens wanting in the literary language:

But none so lovely and so brave

As *him* who wither'd in the grave.—*Byron*.

Nor *thee* nor *them*, thrice noble Tamburlaine,

Shall want my heart to be with gladness fill'd.—*Marlowe*.

If you were here, you would find three or four in the parlour, after dinner, *whom*, you would say, passed their afternoons very agreeably.—*Swift*.

(2) An appositive, assumptive or predicative, is put in the same case as the substantive to which it refers:

He was the son of the Rev. Dr. West, perhaps *him* who published Pindar at Oxford.—*Johnson*.

It is *I*.—*Dickens*.

I am *I*.—*Shakespeare*.

Who are thou?—*Wycliff*.

He enjoys, *he sinner*, a glimpse of the glorious Martyr's very Body.—*Carlyle*.

The following constructions, viewed in the light of analogy, will be seen therefore to be erroneous:

Whom do they say that I am?—*Matthew*.

I would not be *thee*, uncle.—*Shakespeare*.

Let us make a covenant, *I* and *thou*.—*Genesis*.

(3) The case of the object is accusative:

I design'd *thee*

For Richelieu's murderer.—*Bulwer*.

*Him* I had known,

Had served *with*, suffered *with*.—*Rogers*.

This rule is frequently violated, not seldom in the literary, but particularly in the popular, speech:

Who have we got here?—*Smollet*.

Who does it come from?—*Goldsmith*.

Let *they* who raise the spell beware the Fiend.—*Bulwer*.

Perhaps every one present, except *he*, guessed why.—*Charles Kingsley*.

(4) It is a fundamental rule in English that the verb should agree with its subject in number and person:

The Lotos *blooms* below the barren peak.—*Tennyson*.

This 'Romeo and Juliet' *was* not only produced at Weimar.—*Lewes*.

Dryden's and Rowe's manner *are* quite out of fashion.—*Goldsmith*.

So *mingle* banner, wain, and gun.—*Scott*.

The oldest, as well as the newest, wine

*Begins* to stir itself.—*Longfellow*.

Offences often arise from the inversion or intervention of

parts, both of which causes tend to obscure the true subject. Concord is of course more difficult to preserve in long sentences than in short ones:

What *means* these questions?—*Young*.

There *is* no more such Cæsars.—*Shakespeare*.

Nor wood, nor tree, nor bush, *are* there.—*Scott*.

Within *stands* two cloaked figures.—*Charles Kingsley*.

No action or institution can be salutary and stable which *are* not based on reason and the will of God.—*M. Arnold*.

Neither the difficulty nor the cost *are* insuperable.—*W. R. Greg*.

The delusiveness of Bolingbroke's repeated observations *are* transparent enough.—*A. W. Ward*.

(5) A pronoun agrees, in number and person, with that for which it stands:

Are you not *he*

*That fights* the maidens?—*Shakespeare*.

Pope, *who couldst* make Immortals, *art* thou dead?—*Young*.

Happy day! *that breaks* our chain!—*Ibid*.

Faulty examples are:

*Nobody* knows what it is to lose a friend, till *they* have lost him.—*Fielding*.

*A person* of beautiful mind, dwelling on whatever appears to *them* most desirable . . . will not only pass *their* time pleasantly, etc.—*Ruskin*.

One of *those* fanciful, exotic combinations that *gives* the same impression of brilliancy and richness that one receives from tropical insects and flowers.—*Mrs. Stowe*.

This is one of the most important *cases* of releasing right of entry for conditions broken *which* has been settled by arbitration for a considerable period.—*Dr. Holmes*.

(6) In general, a word should have grammatical, as well as logical, connection with the rest of the sentence. Non-rhetorical pleonasms and non-referable participles like the following are therefore wrong:

I bemoan Lord Carlisle, *for whom*, although I have never seen

him, and he may never have heard of me, I have a sort of personal liking for *him*.—*Miss Mitford*.

And the reason seems to be given by some words of our Bible, *which*, though they may not be the exact rendering of the original in that place, yet in themselves *they* explain the connection of culture and conduct very well.—*M. Arnold*.

There is a story of a father whom his sons resolved to rob. *Having left* unguarded the key of his escritoire as if through forgetfulness, the *thief* rushed toward the gold.—*Professor J. P. Nichol*.

*Having perceived* the weakness of his poems upon the Franco-German war, *they* now reappear to us under new titles, and largely pruned or otherwise remodeled.—*E. C. Stedman*.

(7) In the sequence of tenses, the objective relations of time should be preserved:

*I purpose to write* the history of England.—*Macaulay*.

*'Twill be no crime to have been* Cato's friend.—*Addison*.

*I thought* I ne'er *should see* his face again.—*Longfellow*.

The fog and frost so *hung* about the black old gateway of the house, that it *seemed* as if the Genius of the Weather sat in mournful meditation on the threshold.—*Dickens*.

Specimens of incorrect usage are:

*I was much tempted<sup>1</sup> to have broken* the rascal's head [tempted to break].—*Scott*.

Dunwoodie! is he then here? *I thought to have met* him by the side of my brother's bed [thought to meet].—*Cooper*.

*I intended to have insisted* on this sympathy at greater length.—*Ruskin*.

Friendships which we once *hoped* and *believed* would never have grown cold.—*F. W. Farrar*.

It *would* doubtless *have exhibited* itself quietly enough if it *were* [had been] absolutely undiluted.—*Justin McCarthy*.

(8) Universal truths or permanent arrangements require the present tense. Hence the following are incorrect:

<sup>1</sup> The state or activity denoted by the principal verb, is here, evidently, logically and chronologically prior to that denoted by the dependent verb.

It is confidently reported that two young gentlemen . . . have made a discovery that there *was* no God.—*Swift*.

(9) In the sequence of moods and in the use of compound tense-forms, congruity of parts should be observed. Instances of error are:

I suppose you would aim at him best of all, if he *was* [were] out of sight.—*Sheridan*.

I would not have said this for the world, if I *was* [were] not a little anxious about my own girl.—*Bulwer*.

Politics *would* become one network of complicated restrictions as soon as women *shall* [should] succeed in getting their voice preponderant in the state.—*Spectator*, 1869.

I never *have*, and never *will*, *attack* a man for speculative opinions.—*Buckle*.

Those persons for whom this distinction is too subtle *had* [might] better *confine* themselves to plain English.<sup>1</sup>—*R. G. White*.

And the idols are *broke* in the temple of Baal.—*Byron*.

To be avenged

On him who *had stole* Jove's authentic fire,

Too divine to be mistook.—*Milton*.

Of the last two examples it may be said that the solecism is a poetic license. A grammatically purer poet than either of the above, however, could write, in the same measure as that of Milton:

His countenance meanwhile

Was *hidden* from my view, and he remained

Unrecognized; but, *stricken* by the sight,

With slacken'd footsteps I advanced.—*Wordsworth*.

(10) Purity further requires conformity to the English

<sup>1</sup> Farther on (*Words and their Uses*), Mr. White maintains the incongruity of this form: 'Another example of the so-called authoritative *misuse* of language is the use of *had* in the phrases, *I had rather, you had better*. . . . Nothing . . . is more certain than that *had* expresses perfected and past possession. How . . . can it be used to express future action?' In a later work (*Every-Day English*), Mr. White ventures the prediction that the verdict of the court which pronounces judgment upon language — 'a mixed commission of the common and the critical — will be against such uses of words as *had rather be* and *had better go*.'

order, the general principle of which is, that words and clauses nearly related in thought should be placed in close conjunction. Where, as in our language, there are so few inflectional endings to indicate the connection of parts, collocation is of prime importance. The force of the rule will be best understood by illustrations of its neglect:

I can *only* deal with the complaint in a general way.—*Dean Alford*.

It can *only* be justified by necessity.—*Dr. Bascom*.

In considering the life of Seneca, we are *not only* dealing with a life which was rich in memorable incidents . . . but also [with] the life of one who climbed the loftiest peaks of the moral philosophy of Paganism.—*F. W. Farrar*.

In all these examples the adverb 'only' is misplaced. Its position is at variance with the thought. Thus the first and second should read, as they mean: 'I can deal with the complaint *only in a general way*' [in a general way only]; 'It can be justified *only by necessity*' [by necessity only]. Similarly:

The distinction is observed in French, but *never* appears to have been made [appears never to have been made], etc.—*Dean Alford*.

I *never* remember to have felt an event more deeply than his death [cannot remember to have ever felt].—*Rev. Sidney Smith*.

Again:

Mr. Carlyle has taught us that silence is golden *in thirty volumes*.—*John Morley*.

People ceased to wonder *by degrees*.—*Mrs. Oliphant*.

He resisted every attempt to raise the veil *with rather superfluous indignation*.—*Leslie Stephen*.

The following instances of the 'squinting construction'—the looking both ways—are somewhat more marked:

John Keats, the second of four children, *like Chaucer and Spenser*, was a Londoner [was, like Chaucer and Spenser].—*J. R. Lowell*.

There have been three famous talkers in Great Britain, *either* of whom would illustrate what I say about dogmatists *well enough* [double error: any one of whom, illustrate well enough].—*Dr. Holmes.*

It must be remembered in criticism that exceptions are always to be made in favor of poetry and certain kinds of fiction—especially the latter, where the first aim is verisimilitude. Thus, aiming at the truth of resemblance, a writer may, in the dialect of Northampton or Somerset, say, though ungrammatically, *he'm (he am), we'm, you'm, I are, he are*, etc.; with Fielding, 'I'll pepper you better than ever *you was* peppered'; with Sheridan, 'So *I says*'; with Goldsmith, '*I loves* to hear him sing.'

**Propriety.**—It is manifestly essential to perspicuity that words be employed in one of their well-understood meanings, and that the aptest be chosen. In the author's practice, however, they may not express the idea intended; they may express it, but not fully; or they may express it and something more. *Propriety*, as herein conceived, stands opposed to all these faults. *Impropriety*, therefore, whether of word or of phrase, will vary from a slight departure from the most appropriate application of a term to its total perversion.

1. Synonymous words—words of similar import, agreeing in their main idea, but differing in their subordinate and accessory ideas—are especially liable to careless use. How rich is the English language in words generically alike yet specifically different, and how important it is, for beauty and accuracy of expression, to attend to the nicer shades of meaning, may be seen in the following:

*May, can, might, could.* The first denotes liberty and probability; the second, possibility—

Thou *canst* not call him from the Stygian shore,  
But thou, alas! *mayst* live to suffer more.—*Pope.*

Permission is granted by *may*; mere ability or power is expressed by *can*. The school-boy that puts up his hand and says, 'Please, *can* I go out?' means, and should say, '*May* I go out?' The mother that says, in complying with the wish of her child, 'You *can* go,' should say, 'You *may* go.' *Might* and *could*, the preterites, follow the regimen of *may* and *can*.

*Shall, will, should, would.* The general rule to be observed in the use of *shall* and *will* is, that when mere futurity is to be expressed, without reference to the speaker's resolve, the appropriate forms are *shall* in the first person, *will* in the second and third; but when the idea of volition or compulsion is to be conveyed, the first person requires *will*, the second and third *shall*:

This child I to myself *will* take;  
She *shall* be mine, and I *will* make  
A lady of my own.  
The stars of midnight *shall* be dear  
To her; and she *shall* lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
*Shall* pass into her face.—*Wordsworth.*

Few mistakes will be made, if it be fixed firmly in the mind that 'I shall,' 'you will,' 'he will,' are the forms of the future simply; and that 'I will,' 'you shall,' 'he shall,' are the forms of the future as connected with the speaker's resolve or conviction. The same rules govern the use of the preterites.

*Ought, should, must.* Both the first and the second imply obligation, but *ought* is the stronger. What we *ought* to do, we are morally bound to do. We *ought* to be truthful, we *should* be respectful to our elders. *Must* signifies rather the irresistible, the inevitable. Where it involves the idea of obligation, it does not rest in a con-



sciousness or recognition of what is obligatory, but looks constrainedly or resolutely to action,—

The Bhow Begun laid down her snuff-box and replied, entering into the feeling as well as echoing the words, 'It *ought* to be written in a book,—certainly it *ought*.' . . . 'It *must* be written in a book,' said I, encouraged by her manner.—*Southey*.

The following lines from the German may not be, in this connection, without a helpful suggestiveness:

Six little words do claim me every day,  
*Shall, must, and can, with will and ought and may.*  
*Shall* is the law within, inscribed by heaven,  
 The goal to which I by myself am driven.  
*Must* is the bound not to be overpast,  
 Where by the world and nature I'm held fast.  
*Can* is the measure of my personal dower  
 Of deed and art, science and practised power.  
*Will* is my noblest crown, my brightest, best,  
 Freedom's own seal upon my soul imprest;  
*Ought*, the inscription on the seal set fair  
 On Freedom's open door, a bolt 'tis there.  
 And lastly *may*, 'mong many courses mixed,  
 The vaguely possible by the moment fixed.  
*Shall, must, and can, with will and ought and may,*  
 These are the six that claim me every day.  
 Only when God doth teach, do I know what each day,  
 I shall, I must, I can, I will, I ought, I may.

*Centre, middle.* The first involves the idea of a circle, the second is of far more general import: the *centre* of a polygon, the *middle* of a bar or line:

Earth, self-balance'd, on her *centre* hung.—*Milton*.  
 But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,  
 Benighted walks under the *mid-day* sun.—*Ibid*.  
 And having climb'd the steep-up heavenly hill,  
 Resembling strong youth in his *middle* age.—*Shakespeare*.

*Effect, consequence.* Both signify that which follows something else. An *effect* proceeds from an efficient cause; a *consequence*, from something that stands to it

simply in the relation of antecedent. The former applies to physical or moral objects; the latter, to moral objects only:

Gunpowder is the *effect* of a mixture of sulphur, charcoal, and nitre.—*Sir William Hamilton.*

A passion for praise produces very good *effects*.—*Addison.*

Jealousy often draws after it a fatal train of *consequences*.—*Ibid.*

*Modesty, bashfulness, diffidence.* The first refers to a trait or habit of mind, and is to be encouraged; the second, to a state of feeling, and is to be corrected; the third is a culpable distrust, which altogether disqualifies a person for his duty.

*Modesty* is to merit what shades are to the figures in a picture; it gives it strength and heightening.—*La Bruyère.*

Mere *bashfulness*, without merit, is awkwardness.—*Addison.*

*Diffidence* and presumption both arise from the want of knowing, or rather endeavoring to know, ourselves.—*Steele.*

*Custom, habit.* *Custom* is a frequent repetition of the same act; *habit*, the effect of such repetition. The one supposes an act of the will, the other implies an involuntary movement:

Man bows to *custom* as he bows to fate.—*Crabbe.*

How use doth breed a *habit* in a man!—*Shakespeare.*

*Invention, discovery.* We *discover* what existed, but was before unknown; we *invent* what before did not exist. We *discover* a thing entire; we *invent* a thing by applying or modelling materials which exist separately:

Galileo *invented* the telescope.

Columbus *discovered* America.

*Complete, whole, entire, total.* *Whole* is that from which nothing has been taken; *complete* is that in which there is no deficiency; *entire*, that which has not been divided into parts; *total* refers to all the parts taken collectively. A thing is *entire* when it wants none of its

parts; it is *complete* when it wants none of the ordinary appendages belonging to it. A *whole* orange has had nothing taken from it; a *complete* orange has grown to its full size; an *entire* orange is not yet cut. It is possible, therefore, for a thing to be *whole*, and yet not *entire*; and to be both, and yet not *complete*. An orange cut into parts is *whole* while all the parts remain together, but it is not *entire*. We speak, thus, of a *whole* house, an *entire* set, a *complete* book.

*Enough, sufficient.* *Enough* relates to the quantity which one wishes to have of anything; *sufficient* relates to the use that is to be made of it. Hence *enough* generally imports a greater quantity than *sufficient*. The covetous man never has *enough*; although he has what is *sufficient* for nature.

*Alone, only.* *Alone* (all one, single, by one's self) means not accompanied by another object; *only* (contracted from *onely*) implies that there is no other object of the same kind. An *only* child is one that has no brother or sister; a child *alone* is one left by itself.

*Equivocal, ambiguous.* *Equivocal* means that which may be equally well understood in two or more senses; *ambiguous* is applied to an expression which has apparently two or more meanings, and it is doubtful which of these is intended. A designedly *equivocal* expression has one sense open, and meant to be understood in that sense, yet another sense concealed, and understood only by the person using it. An *equivocal* expression, if deliberately chosen, is used with an intention to deceive; an *ambiguous* one, when thus adopted, with an intention not to give full information. The ambiguity arises from a too general form of expression, which leaves the sense of the author indeterminate. The equivocation misleads us by the use of a term in the sense which we do not suspect.

*To avow, to acknowledge, to confess.* Each of these

words denotes the making known to others what relates to one's self. *To avow* supposes the person to glory in it; *to acknowledge* is to declare one's assent to a thing or recognition of it; *to confess* is applied chiefly to criminal or highly culpable matters. Scorn or love is *avowed*; a favor, a mistake, or a fault is *acknowledged*; a crime is *confessed*.

*Observance, observation.* The former is the act of observing, in the sense of keeping or holding sacred; the latter, in the sense of examination. The circulation of the blood was discovered by a minute *observation* of the human body; a person acquires the title of uprightness by a strict *observance* of truth and justice.

2. One word may be used for another, not of similar but of totally different signification.

*Lie, lay.* These, as well as their preterites, are often confounded. The one is intransitive—to be in a horizontal position; the other is transitive. The book *lies*, not *lays*, on the table. He *lay*, not *laid*, down.

*Sit, set.* These words are grossly misused—liable to be confounded in precisely the same manner as the preceding. An old lady, in describing her disease to an eccentric Boston physician, said, 'The trouble, Doctor, is that I can neither *lay* nor *set*.' 'Then, Madam,' was the reply, 'I would respectfully suggest the propriety of roosting.'

*Vocation, avocation.* The first means *calling* or profession; the second, *calling away from*, something that interrupts regular business. Every man should have a fixed pursuit, as the business of his life—his *vocation*. His *avocations* will be the occasional calls that summon him to leave his ordinary employment. The former should occupy him principally, the latter incidentally only. Mademoiselle Bernhardt's *vocation* is acting; her *avocations* are painting and sculpture.

*Apt, liable.* *Apt* respects a fitness to be or to do something from the habit or temper of the mind; *liable* is applied to those circumstances by which we are affected independently of our choice. Both express conditions—but one, of fitness and readiness; the other, of exposure. Commit to memory a wise sentence or an *apt* phrase. All persons are *liable* to make mistakes. Under certain circumstances, most people are *apt* to marry; all people are *liable* to fall in love.

3. Impropriety may arise from the relation of a word or phrase to other parts of the sentence. The expression, when analyzed, is found to contain an inconsistency, or some misapplication of the parts of speech: as in Swift's 'such occasions as fell *into* [under] their cognizance,' or Goldsmith's 'rushed and expired *in* the midst of the flames' [rushed *into* the flames and expired *in* their midst], or Johnson's 'The solace arising from this consideration seems indeed the weakest *of all others*' [weakest of all, or weaker than any other]. Such errors, it will be seen, partake of the nature of solecisms, or violations of grammatical purity.

4. Another offence against propriety is exaggeration, or the use of language disproportionate to the importance of the ideas to be expressed, as when every fortune is said to be 'colossal'; every crowd 'a sea of faces'; every sermon 'grand'; everything handsome or pleasing, 'elegant,' 'splendid,' 'delicious,' 'nice,' or 'charming'; everything we dislike, 'hateful,' 'dreadful,' 'horrible,' 'shocking'; while pies are 'loved,' and pickles are 'just doted on.' It is forgotten that there are three degrees of comparison. Epithets are heightened into superlatives; superlatives stretch themselves into hyperboles; and hyperboles themselves get out of breath, and die asthmatically of exhaustion.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William Mathews.

5. Finally, propriety is violated by the use of pronouns which darkly refer to their antecedent, and of word, which either, with sameness of form, have different senses in the same sentence, or are equivocal, thus admitting of being understood in a sense different from that in which the writer applies them. Thus, 'oldest inmate' may mean either the oldest person among the inmates or the person longest in the establishment. 'Love of God' meant equally well His love for man or man's love for Him.

In the following example from the *Westminster Review*, the first 'variety' means *diversity*; the second, *kind*: 'The wild flowers [in California] are more remarkable for their abundance than for their *variety*.' Let a sentence from Steele illustrate the fault of obscure pronominal reference: '*They* were persons of such moderate intellects, even before *they* were impaired by their passions, that *their* irregularities could not furnish sufficient variety of folly.'

Some of the improprieties here pointed out are exemplified in the subjoined citations:

I do likewise dissent with the Examiner.—*Addison*.

The esteem which Phillip had conceived of the ambassador.—*Hume*.

These ceremonious rites became familiar.—*Robertson*.

Mara's opinion in their mutual studies began to assume a value in his eyes.—*Mrs. H. B. Stowe*.

I am now grown old in the avocations of the gown.—*Bishop Warburton*.

The king of solitude is also the king of society. The reverse, however, is not so true.—*W. R. Alger*.

Others speak from the throat in a hollow, sepulchral tone, and with an elaboration of syllables and emphasis so mixed together that no ear can eliminate the individual words.—*E. S. Gould*.

I need not here repeat that which I stated verbally on the occasion of our interview.—*Lord Stanley*.

I think it must have been to some such primitive explanation of the whooping-cough that there has grown up in Austria the unique custom of treating the disease by administering the rod.—*Moncure D. Conway.*

But as it happened, scarcely had Phœbe's eyes rested again on the judge's countenance than all its ugly sternness vanished.—*Hawthorne.*

I have but one comfort in thinking of the poor, and that is, that we get somehow adjusted to the condition in which we grow up, and we do not miss the absence of what we have never enjoyed.—*Froude.*

It remains to be observed that these remarks are subject to limitation. Some improprieties, though grammatically censurable, are rhetorically justifiable, as in satire, burlesque, and wherever the aim is to give a truthful representation of character.

**Simplicity.**—By this is meant the quality of being easily understood. It may apply either to the terms or to the structure. Words may be simple because they relate to things common and familiar, instead of to things rare and remote. So far as discourse is intended for the popular mind, one of the best principles of selection is to prefer words of Saxon origin, to which belongs the vocabulary of common life—of the street, the market, the farm, and the fireside. This is the greatly preponderant element in the books which are most widely circulated—*English Bible, Pilgrim's Progress, Robinson Crusoe, Gulliver's Travels.* The most influential preachers of the age—Spurgeon and Beecher—express themselves in familiar language, and take their images from familiar sources. Many foreign words, it should be observed, which have come into use among people generally, are equally perspicuous. Thus, *religion, portion, politics, science, musician, brief, press, voice, journey,* have been thoroughly naturalized. The diction of a correct writer will vary, of course, with the subject and purpose. Ordinary topics will be most intelligibly treated in the vernacular. If a

particular class of minds is addressed, the words level to that class — whether artists, theologians, scientists, mechanics, miners, or sailors — will, as far as practicable, be chosen. He who mounts into the region of complex feeling and thought, requires a complex means of expression — words short and long, humble and majestic, light and ponderous, words of which a large proportion come from the Latin or the Greek. ‘A book,’ says Landor, ‘composed of merely Saxon words (if such a thing could be) would only prove the perverseness of the author. It would be inelegant, inharmonious, and deficient in the power of conveying thoughts and images, of which, indeed, such a writer could have but extremely few at starting. Let the Saxon, however, be always the ground-work.’

Again, while intelligibility is promoted by *familiar* as opposed to *unusual* words, it is further promoted by *specific* as opposed to *abstract* words. The first are comparatively individual, the second collective. Do not seek to lift up your thoughts by the leverage of grandiose phraseology. The more general a notion is, the less conceivable it is, and the greater the need of simple, homely, and concrete symbols. Hence *ache* is more vivid than *pain*; *circle*, than *curve*; *lily*, than *flower*; *stab*, than *kill*; *twinkle*, than *shine*. Thus Milton, instead of using the generic, *mountain*, says with fine effect:

O'er many a frozen, many a fiery *Alp*.

So Antony is described as saying, not ‘Those honorable men who have killed Cæsar,’ but

Those honorable men whose *daggers* have *stabbed* Cæsar.

Obviously, the application of this principle is modified,

- (1) when the subject is essentially technical or abstract, as in law, medicine, navigation, logic, metaphysics, etc.;
- (2) when the abstractions are simple and easy, as *width*, *motion*, *warmth*, *sweetness*, *beauty*, *virtue*, *truth*, *love*;
- (3) when they are repeated in the concrete.



General terms, it is evident, are indispensable both to conversation and to print. Without class names—literature or fluid, for example—we should be obliged to enumerate the individuals of every class mentioned. If less distinct than particular terms, their compensating advantage is, that they sum up the characteristics of a number of things, and are therefore entitled to preference when brevity is an object. The maxim of composition is, that since we think in particulars, not in generals, the more special the terms are, the brighter the picture, and that concrete forms should therefore be used instead of abstract ones when possible.

Simplicity of structure, to which we have adverted already, is such an arrangement of words into sentences, and of sentences into paragraphs, as is easily comprehensible. It will be more fully considered hereafter.

What is here stated—the superiority, in general, of the Saxon element, of simple words and collocations, and of specific expressions—is illustrated in the following extracts:

I love God and little children.—*Richter*.

It has not wit enough to keep it sweet.—*Johnson on the Rehearsal*.

It has not sufficient virtue to preserve it from putrefaction.

—*His labored after-thought*.

Be polished, but solid. We cannot polish any matter that is not solid. [*Abstract, or generic.*] We cannot polish boultry, but we can polish ebony. We cannot polish pumice-stone, but we can polish marble. We cannot polish lead, but we can polish gold. [*Concrete, or specific.*].—*Ouida*.

A violet by the mossy stone

Half hidden from the eye!

Fair as a star when only one

Is shining in the sky.—*Wordsworth*.

It has been customary of late years for the purveyors of amusing literature to put forth opuscles denominated Christmas books, with the ostensible intention of swelling the tide of exhilaration or other

expansive emotions incident on the exodus of the old or the inauguration of the new year.—*London Times*.

We can sing away our cares easier than we can reason them away. The birds are the earliest to sing in the morning; the birds are more without care than anything else I know of. Sing in the evening. Singing is the last thing that Robins do. When they have done their daily work, when they have flown their last flight, and picked up their last morsel of food, and cleansed their bills on a napkin of a bough, then on a top twig, they sing one song of praise. I know they sleep sweeter for it. They dream music, for sometimes in the night they break in singing, and stop suddenly after the first note, startled by their own voice. Oh that we might sing evening and morning, and let song touch song all the way through.—*Beecher*.

We add two examples in which the Saxon and the Latin elements are most happily combined :

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood  
Clean from my hand? No! this, my hand will rather  
The multitudinous sea incarnardine,  
Making the green one red.—*Shakespeare*.

In August the grass is still verdant on the hills and in the valleys; the foliage of the trees is as dense as ever and as green; the flowers gleam forth in richer abundance along the margins of the river, and by the stone walls, and deep among the woods; the days, too, are as fervid now as they were a month ago; and yet in every breath of wind and in every beam of sunshine we hear the whispered farewell, and behold the parting smile of a dear friend. There is a coolness amid all the heat, a mildness in the blazing noon. Not a breeze can stir but it thrills us with the breath of autumn. A pensive glory is seen in the far, golden beams, among the shadows of the trees. The flowers—even the brightest of them, and they are not the most gorgeous of the year—have this gentle sadness wedded to their pomp, and typify the character of the delicious time each within itself. The brilliant cardinal flower has never seemed gay to me. Still later in the season, Nature's tenderness waxes stronger. It is impossible not to be fond of our mother now; for she is so fond of us! At other periods she does not make this impression on me, or only at rare intervals; but in those genial days of autumn when she has perfected her harvests and accomplished every needful thing

that was given her to do, then she overflows with a blessed superfluity of love. She has labor to caress her children now. It is good to be alive and at such times. Thank Heaven for breath,—yes, for mere breath,—when it is made up of a heavenly breeze like this? It comes with a real kiss upon our cheeks; it would linger fondly around us if it might; but, since it must be gone, it embraces us with its whole kindly heart, and passes onward to embrace likewise the next thing that it meets. A blessing is flung abroad and scattered far and wide over the earth, to be gathered up by all who choose. I recline upon the still unwithered grass and whisper to myself, ‘O perfect day! O beautiful world! O beneficent God!’—*Hawthorne.*

**Conciseness.**—This refers to the number of words employed, and is synonymous with brevity of expression. It implies the rejection of whatever is not material to the meaning. One of the finest examples of it is Cæsar’s famous message to the Senate, *Veni, vidi, vici*—I came, I saw, I conquered. All words call for attention, absorb a certain amount of mental power, and therefore, if they add nothing to the sense, they tend only to embarrassment and feebleness. Familiar illustrations of the brief, clear, and striking, are found in proverbs, maxims, current sayings. Passages exhibiting this excellence could be culled copiously from the works of writers foremost in literature. The following are specimens:

Virtue is like a rich stone—best plain set.—*Bacon.*

’Tis better to be lowly born,  
And range with humble livers in content  
Than to be perk’d up in glistening grief  
And wear a golden sorrow.—*Shakespeare.*

Men are but children of a larger growth.—*Dryden.*

Hitch your wagon to a star.—*Emerson.*

Thefts never enrich; alms never impoverish; murder will speak out of stone walls.—*Ibid.*

While words should not be unnecessarily multiplied, they should not be too few either for the sense or for the

rapidity of movement of which the reader or listener is capable. Conciseness when carried to excess becomes the occasion of darkness:

1. By improper ellipsis, or faulty omission. Thus the question put to Simon Peter may mean 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than [thou lovest] these?' or 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these [love me]?' Similarly, 'One victory by land or sea,' says Southey, 'turns the scale, and the northern powers, who have more reason to hate France *than England*, will then join us.' 'When a man,' says the *Spectator*, 'considers not only an ample fortune, but even the very necessities of life, his pretence to food itself, at the mercy of others, he cannot but look upon himself in the state of the dead with his case thus much worse, that the last office is performed by his adversaries instead of his friends.' *As being* should be supplied before 'at the mercy,' and *as* should be inserted before 'in the state.'

2. By an insufficient statement of the thought, as in Emerson's proposition, 'Where snow falls, there is freedom,' meaning that tropical heat debilitates the energies of men, and so prepares them for political slavery; or Fontenelle's injunction to the tutor of Louis XV, 'You will strive with all your efforts to make yourself useless,' that is, So advance your ward in knowledge that your services will no longer be needed by him. It should not be forgotten that matter intended for delivery calls for greater copiousness of treatment than what is to be printed, and read at leisure; that when the subject is difficult to be understood by the persons addressed, or when it is disagreeable and must be circuitously approached, more or less repetition is necessary; that it is often desirable, if not needful, for vividness of impression, to detain the attention on the point or topic in hand by repeating the same sentiment in many different forms of

expression, each in itself brief, yet collectively affording such expansiveness as will render the matter capable of being thoroughly digested and assimilated.

**Unity.**—By this is meant such a distribution of materials as shall keep the dominant idea of the sentence prominently before the mind, with minor parts so arranged as to indicate at once their dependence and connection. Hence the loose collocation of numerous details; the crowding together of too many thoughts, or of thoughts disconnected and incongruous; the introduction of long or abrupt parenthetical clauses, especially of parentheses within parentheses—should be avoided:

For this cause *I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles*, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord; in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him . . . beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.—*Ephesians*.

In this and similar cases, the remedy is to cut up the long and crowded sentences into shorter and more congruous ones. The simple structure is, on the whole, more favorable to perspicuity than the periodic. A too frequent or too prolonged suspension of the sense becomes painful. Mere length, however, is not of so great moment as the

character of the construction. The prime object is so to arrange the different parts that the meaning of each may be understood in the order in which it is presented, not left to be comprehended at the end, in itself and its connections, by re-reading and reflection. The following, from Cowley's *Essay on Cromwell*, is of unusual length, yet unity is preserved throughout:

What can be more extraordinary than that a person of mean birth, no fortune, no eminent qualities of body, which have sometimes — or of mind, which have often — raised men to the highest dignities, should have the courage to attempt, and the happiness to succeed in so improbable a design, as the destruction of one of the most ancient and most solidly-founded monarchies upon the earth? that he should have the power or boldness to put his prince and master to an open and infamous death; to banish that numerous and strongly allied family; to do all this under the name and wages of a parliament; to trample upon them, too, as he pleased, and spurn them out of doors when he grew weary of them; to raise up a new and unheard-of monster out of their ashes; to stifle that in the very infancy, and set up himself above all things that ever were called sovereign in England; to oppress all his enemies by arms, and all his friends afterwards by artifice; to serve all parties patiently for awhile, and to command them victoriously at last; to overrun each corner of the three nations, and overcome with equal facility both the riches of the south and the poverty of the north; to be feared and courted by all foreign princes, and adopted a brother to the gods of the earth; to call together parliaments with a word of his pen, and scatter them again with the breath of his mouth; to be humbly and daily petitioned, that he would please to be hired, at the rate of two millions a year, to be the master of those who had hired him before to be their servant; to have the estates and lives of three kingdoms as much at his disposal as was the little inheritance of his father, and to be as noble and liberal in the spending of them; and lastly, for there is no end of all the particulars of his glory, to bequeath all this with one word to his posterity; to die with peace at home and triumph abroad; to be buried among kings, and with more than regal solemnity; and to leave a name behind him not to be extinguished but with the whole world; which, as it is now too little for his praises, so might have been, too, for his conquests, if the short

line of his human life could have been stretched out to the extent of his immortal designs?

We have already noticed how important is the function of connective and reference forms in promoting unity and clearness. 'A close reasoner and a good writer in general,' says Coleridge, 'may be known by his pertinent use of connectives.'

**Imagery.**—Figures of speech should, for the purpose of clearness, be derived from such objects and truths as are familiar to the minds addressed, and should be so presented as to be easily intelligible. A chief instrument of perspicuity is comparison, implied or explicit. The known is made to shed light upon the unknown. Things remote receive lustre from things allied. A similitude or an analogy is more readily comprehensible than an abstract term. The Bible abounds in abstract similes. Antithesis sharpens the outline of objects, material or mental, which are contrasted as well as compared. Of the value of comparison, illustrated elsewhere in its several forms, the following is an admirable example :

Last autumn, in some of the pastures, fire ran along the wall, and left the ground black with its ephemeral charcoal, where now the little wind-flower lifts its delicate form and bends its slender neck, and blushes with its own beauty, gathered from the black ground out of which it grew; or some trillium opens its painted cup, and in due time will show its fruit, a beautiful berry there. So out of human soil, blackened by another fire which has swept over it, in due time flowers will come in the form of spiritual beauty not yet seen, and other fruit will grow there whose seed is in itself, and which had not ripened but out of that black ground. Thus the lilies of peace cover the terrible fields of Waterloo, and out of the graves of our dear ones there spring up such flowers of spiritual loveliness as you and I else had never known. It is not from the tall crowded warehouse of prosperity that men first or clearest see the eternal stars of heaven. It is from the humble spots where we have laid our dear ones that we find our best observatory, which gives us glimpses into the far-off world of never-ending time.—*Theodore Parker.*

Finally, it cannot be too deeply impressed upon the youthful writer,

(1) That the foundation of clear expression is clear thinking. Thoughts that circulate under the name of deep thinking are often but half-formed thoughts. 'Words, words, nothing but words,' is Carlyle's criticism on some of the nebulous poetry of Robert Browning. Fontenelle's rule in composition was, 'I always try first to understand myself.'

(2) That the most laborious and original thinkers have been the most faithful critics of diction and construction. Rousseau, who had much difficulty in finding words, wrote his *Emile* nine times. John Foster, some of whose essays are marvellously rich, often discussed arrangement in his correspondence with literary friends.

(3) That we are not sure of understanding ourselves perfectly, unless we have done what we can to make ourselves readily understood. 'In order to write clearly,' says La Bruyère, 'every writer should put himself in the place of his readers; should examine his own work as something which is new to him, which he reads for the first time, in which he has no peculiar interest, and which the author has submitted to his criticism.'

(4) That a negligent or slovenly habit of utterance begets an indolent habit of thought.

#### EXERCISES.

Criticise and amend:

1. Who can he take after?—*Sheridan*.
2. How agrees the devil and thee?—*Shakespeare*.
3. I did think to have beaten thee.—*Ibid*.
4. Who you saw sitting by me.—*Ibid*.
5. This hour I throw ye off.—*Congreve*.
6. Earth up hath swallowed all my hopes but she.—*Shakespeare*.



7. I can only regard them as Scotticisms.—*Dean Alford.*
8. A decided weak point is detected.—*Ibid.*
9. The vice of covetousness is what enters deepest into the soul of any other.—*Guardian.*
10. The great masters of critical learning differ among one another.—*Spectator.*
11. A petty constable will neither act cheerfully or wisely.—*Swift.*
12.                               The loveliest pair  
That ever since in love's embraces met.—*Milton.*
13. We need not, nor do not, confine the purposes of God.—*Bentley.*
14. I can never think so very mean of him.—*Ibid.*
15. I shall endeavor to live hereafter suitable to a man in my station.—*Addison.*
16. I am equally an enemy to a female dunce or a female pedant.—*Goldsmith.*
17. Dr. Johnson, with whom I am sorry to differ in opinion, has treated it as a work of merit.—*Scott.*
18. This effect, we may safely say, no one beforehand could have promised upon.—*Hume.*
19. But the temper, as well as knowledge, of a modern historian, require a more sober and temperate language.—*Gibbon.*
20. 'Tis observable that every one of the letters bear date after his banishment.—*Bentley.*
21. I am persuaded that neither death nor life . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God.—*St. Paul.*
22. I have furnished the house exactly according to your fancy, or, if you please, my own; for I have long since learned to like nothing but what you do.—*Dryden.*
23. If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee.—*Matthew.*
24. For my part, I cannot think that Shelley's poetry, except by snatches and fragments, has the value of the good work of Wordsworth or Byron.—*Matthew Arnold.*
25. Nor is it easy to conceive that, in substituting the manners of Persia to those of Rome, he was actuated by vanity.—*Gibbon.*

26. A loose sentence is one in which there is a single point, at least, before the close, where a thought is completed; but what follows is not, by itself, complete.<sup>1</sup>—*Prof. Kellogg*.

27. Those with whom we can apparently become well acquainted in a few moments, are generally the most difficult to rightly know and understand.—*Hawthorne*.

28. The first we call by an unwriteable name, and which we cannot more nearly describe than by saying that it is the sound which drops out of the half-open mouth, with the lowest degree of effort, at utterance.<sup>2</sup>—*Prof. Earle*.

29. It is the complex dependences, the involved relations, the assertion sliding on from point to point, that embarrass the mind, tripping it in the meshes of grammar.—*Dr. Bascom*.

30. Whosoever you take him to be, he is Ajax.—*Shakespeare*.

31. I expected to have found Petersburg a wonderful city.—*Bulwer*.

32. Let him know that I shall be over in spring, and that by all means he sells the horses.—*Swift*.

33. As soon as they were established in their new residence, and her father had entered on the routine of his avocations, she arranged the little household as exactly as if her husband had been there.—*Dickens*.

34. Does it, in your eyes, deteriorate from Milton's peculiar greatness that he could not have given us the conception of Falstaff?—*F. W. Farrar*.

35. Shakespeare, the mutual ancestor of Englishmen and Americans.—*Miss Mitford*.

36. You will be pleased, madam, to remember, the lad was sent with a verbal message to the doctor.—*Fielding*.

37. And this prevents their attending enough to what is in the Bible, and makes them battle for what is not in the Bible, but they have put it there.—*Matthew Arnold*.

38. I must not omit one [name], which would alone have been sufficient to have shown that there is no necessary connection between skepticism and the philosophy of the human mind; I mean Bishop Butler.—*Sidney Smith*.

<sup>1</sup> *Text-Book on Rhetoric*.    <sup>2</sup> *Philology of the English Tongue*.

39. A young hunter fell in love with a beautiful girl whom he sought for his wife, and being the pride of his tribe, both for swiftness in the race and for courage in war, his suit was accepted by her father.—*Hepworth Dixon*.

40. Being the only child of a man well to do, nobody would have been surprised had Agnes Stanfield been sent to a boarding-school.—*Mrs. Oliphant*.

41. I really believe that, except to doctors and clergymen, and the very few intimate friends who have seen me frequently, even my state of extremity has been doubted.—*Miss Mitford*.

42. To the Italian (even to one who carries a stiletto) the English practice of boxing is a sheer brutality; while to an Englishman (himself perhaps not a Joseph) the *cavaliere servente* is looked upon with reprobation tempered by scorn.—*George Calvert*.<sup>1</sup>

43. Scarcely had Bentley thus established his fame in this department of letters than he as suddenly broke forth in a still higher.—*Quarterly Review*.

44. But as it happened, scarcely had Phœbe's eyes rested again on the judge's countenance than all its ugly sternness vanished.—*Hawthorne*.

45. I know no course of reading so likely on the one hand to allay the prejudices and animosities of two eager politicians, and, on the other, to rouse the careless and desponding to a generous concern and an animating hope for the public good, than the historical writings in question.—*Jeffrey*.

46. Culture points out that the harmonious perfection of generations of Puritans and Nonconformists have been, in consequence, sacrificed.—*Matthew Arnold*.

47. I have no feeling connected with my general recollection of them, but those to which the combination of good sense, wit, and genius naturally give rise.—*Sidney Smith*.

48. But I think that experience, both in nature and in society, are against that ditch-water philosophy.—*Charles Kingsley*.

49. Unconscious pioneers of all the wealth, and commerce, and beauty, and science, which has in later centuries made that lovely isle the richest gem of all the tropic seas.—*Ibid.*

<sup>1</sup> *Essays Aesthetic*.

50. The fire which glows in Macaulay's history, the intense patriotic feeling, the love of certain moral qualities, is not altogether of the highest kind.—*Leslie Stephen*.

51. Who are the Ministers of the Crown are the accidents of history.—*Disraeli*.

52. The very two individuals whom he thought were far away.—*Ibid*.

53. Those too, no matter who spoke, or whom was addressed, looked at each other.—*Dickens*.

54. That night every man of the boat's crew, save Amyas, were down with raging fever.—*Charles Kingsley*.

55. God forbid that John Hawkins' wife should refuse her last penny to a distressed mariner, and he a gentleman born.—*Ibid*.

56. It is true that when perspective was first discovered, everybody amused themselves with it.—*Ruskin*.

57. He turned to her father as he spoke with the instinct of good breeding.—*Mrs. Oliphant*.

58. The language of Algernon Sidney differs not at all from that which every well-educated gentleman would wish to write. . . . Neither one nor the other differ half as much from the general language of cultivated society as the language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest composition differs from that of a common peasant.—*Coleridge*.

59. The position of the notes, up or down on the scale, indicate various degrees of shrillness or gravity in the sounds.—*Professor Nichol*.<sup>1</sup>

60. The time supposed to elapse should neither be so long or short as to offend a sense of propriety.—*Dr. E. O. Haven*.<sup>2</sup>

61. It should in justice be remarked, however, that neither Dryden nor Locke, in their use of the term wit, seem to have had in mind what we now understand by it.—*Dr. Joseph Haven*.<sup>3</sup>

62. It is this unexpected union and quick recoil of ideas that please the mind.—*Dr. Bascom*.

63. It is the vividness of the ideas presented which arouse emotion, and thus carry over conviction into persuasion.—*Ibid*.

64. But neither of these ideas are in any way connected with eternal beauty.—*Ruskin*.

<sup>1</sup> *English Composition*.

<sup>2</sup> *Rhetoric*.

<sup>3</sup> *Mental Philosophy*.

## CHAPTER V.

### METHODS OF EXPRESSION — ENERGY.

Scattering shot do little execution.—REV. E. O. HAVEN.

He that hath knowledge spareth his words.—PROVERBS.

Speak not at all, in any wise, till you have somewhat to speak; care not for the reward of your speaking, but simply, and with undivided mind, for the truth of your speaking.—CARLYLE.

SHERIDAN, returning one morning from the meeting of Parliament, and being asked by a friend for the news of the day, replied that he had enjoyed a laugh over the speeches of Mr. Fox and Lord Stormont, the latter of whom began by declaring in a slow, solemn, nasal monotone, that ‘when—he—considered—the enormity—and the—unconstitutional—tendency—of the measures—just—proposed, he was—hurried—away in a—torrent—of passion—and a whirlwind—of im-pet-u-os-i-ty.’ Mr. Fox was described as springing to his feet, and beginning, lightning-like, thus: ‘Mr. Speaker, such is the *magnitude* such the *importance* such the *vital interest* of the question that I cannot but *implore* I cannot but *adjure* the House to come to it with the utmost *calmness* the utmost *coolness* the utmost *deliberation*.’ Each manner is here significant of the real state of the writer’s mind: but the one is characterized by immobility, which is death; the other by movement, which is the effect and evidence of life. Both are clear, but the former is crawling, colorless, feeble; the latter is anxious, active, and hence communicative. A thought may be expressed clearly in the highest degree, yet be capable of more

effective presentation. Thus, again, in the following, how much more impressive, though not more perspicuous, is the interrogative than the declarative would be:

Can gray hairs render folly venerable?—*Junius*.

Who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely?

—*Shakespeare*.

Energy may therefore be defined as the force, vigor, or strength of expression, whereby the mind addressed is more or less powerfully influenced or interested. In general, it is promoted by whatever promotes clearness, since what is obscure is, in the measure of its obscurity, not felt. Hence in the choice, number, and arrangement of words, many of the principles which render language clear, render it also energetic.

A first requisite of vigorous statement is *simplicity*, which is the economy of means. Its true name, in eloquence proper, in oratory, is *popularity*, a quality that consists in the use of language composed of expressions familiar to the majority. Popular language is the common ground on which all classes of society meet and communicate with one another. Its best part is Saxon, the strength of which has become one of the truisms of literature. The vernacular carries weight, too, because it is interwoven with the sensibilities of those who use it. Swiss soldiers in the Austrian service used to be forbidden to sing their country's songs in their native tongue because it tempted so many to desertion.

Another essential is *propriety*, or justness, including precision; that is, the choice not only of good English, but of such English as shall express our meaning, no more, no less, no other. Ill-chosen words diminish perspicuity, without which we can never be strong. Says La Bruyère on this subject: 'Among all the different expressions which may render one and the same thought,

only one is good; we do not always fall in with it in speaking or in writing. It nevertheless exists, and every other except that is feeble.' That the want of propriety may be felt, it suffices that the exact correspondence of the term to the idea is not felt. If readers or hearers 'do not distinctly notice that the term is improper, they at least do not receive from it the impression, the stroke, so to speak, which they should receive; the hammer has struck by the side of the nail or struck the nail on the side.'<sup>1</sup>

Specific, individual words, being more definite and life-like, are to be chosen in preference to abstract ones. The former give a distinct picture, readily seized; the latter, a vague statement, grasped with difficulty. The great preachers particularize, dealing little in abstractions. When the Savior would express the goodness or the providence of God, he does it in concrete terms: 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father.' 'Even the very hairs of your head are numbered.' Great orators, great dramatists, are direct, not general. Observe how Shakespeare, his object being to excite horror, puts into the mouth of Antony the most particular expressions:

O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,  
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!  
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man  
That ever lived in the tide of times.  
Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!  
Over the wounds now do I prophesy,—  
Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips,  
To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue,—  
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;  
Domestic fury, and fierce civil strife,  
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;  
Blood and destruction shall be so in use,

And dreadful objects so familiar,  
That mothers shall but smile when they behold  
Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war;  
All pity chok'd with custom of fell deeds;  
And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,  
With Até by his side, come hot from hell,  
Shall in these confines, with a monarch's voice,  
Cry 'Havoc!' and let slip the dogs of war;  
That this foul deed shall smell above the earth  
With carrion men, groaning for burial.

To economize space—so far as this can be done consistently with the adequate expression of the meaning—is to economize the recipient's mental energy, and hence to augment the effect; for the more time and power it takes to receive and understand each sentence, the less can be used to realize the thought conveyed. 'As, when the rays of the sun are collected into the focus of a burning glass, the smaller the spot is which receives them, compared with the surface of the glass, the greater is the splendor, so, in exhibiting our sentiments by speech, the narrower the compass of words is, wherein the thought is comprised, the more energetic is the expression. Accordingly, we find that the very same sentiment expressed diffusely, will be admitted barely to be just; expressed concisely, will be admired as spirited.'

A word, if apt, may tell more than a sentence. A picture may say more than a volume. What is *suggested* is more vivid than what is told. Sir Joshua Reynolds says that Titian knew how to place upon the canvas the image and character of any object he attempted, by a few strokes of the pencil, and that he thus produced a truer representation than any of his predecessors who finished every hair. So the great writers and speakers group instead of analyzing, knowing well that in these days men think and act quickly, with all their faculties on the alert:



If thou be'st he — but O, how fallen, how changed!—*Milton*.

Richter says, in the Island of Sumatra there is a kind of 'Light-chafres,' large Fire-flies, which people stick upon spits, and illuminate the ways with at night. Persons of condition can thus travel with a pleasant radiance, which they much admire. Great honour to the Fire-flies! But —!—*Carlyle*.

There's no one now to share my cup.—*Thackeray*.

Brevity is misplaced, however, if it involves the omission of words necessary to perspicuity. Nor should it be sought alike on every subject and occasion. The ignorant require more explanation than the intelligent. Writing may be more concise than speaking. A reader can re-peruse a sentence, if necessary, or stop and think. A hearer can scarcely pause, without loss, to catch the meaning. Wherever the purpose is persuasion, a certain time, as the skilful orator well knows, is requisite for working up the feelings. Emphasis is increased both by repetition of words and by varying the form of presentation:

Charge, Chester, charge! on, Stanley, on!—*Scott*.

None but the brave,

None but the brave,

None but the brave deserve the fair.—*Dryden*.

If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop were landed in my country, I would never lay down my arms — never, never, never!—*Chatham*.

'Educate the people,' was the admonition of Penn to the commonwealth he founded. 'Educate the people,' was the last legacy of Washington to the Republic of the United States. 'Educate the people,' was the unceasing exhortation of Jefferson.—*Macaulay*.

A chief excellence of oratory is the power to amplify a thought by unfolding it in diverse directions, presenting it in various lights, each distinct from the other in appearance rather than in reality. Observe, in the following extract, the return to a single, central idea, each time from

an advanced, a higher point, to the last sentence, which is a condensed conclusion of the whole:

Power, of some kind or other, will survive the shock in which manners and opinions perish; and it will find other and worse means for its support. The usurpation which, in order to subvert ancient institutions, has destroyed ancient principles, will hold power by arts similar to those by which it has acquired it. When the old feudal and chivalrous spirit of fealty, which, by freeing kings from fear, freed both kings and subjects from the precautions of tyranny, shall be extinct in the minds of men, plots and assassinations will be anticipated by preventive murder and preventive confiscation, and that long roll of grim and bloody maxims, which form the political code of all power not standing on its own honor, and the honor of those who are to obey it. *Kings will be tyrants from policy when subjects are rebels from principle.*—Burke.

A résumé, or summary, which is a form of reiteration, is often very beneficial. It assists the mind as the reaper is assisted in carrying his sheaf by the band which surrounds and compresses it: 'In the senate and, for the same reason, in a newspaper, it is a virtue to reiterate your meaning; . . . variation of the words, with a substantial identity of the sense and dilution of the truth, is oftentimes a necessity. . . . Time must be given for the intellect to eddy about a truth, and to appropriate its bearings, . . . and this is obtained by varying the modes of presenting it—now putting it directly before the eye, now obliquely, now in an abstract shape, now in the concrete; all which being the proper technical discipline for dealing with such cases, ought no longer to be viewed as a licentious mode of style, but as the just style in respect of those licentious circumstances. And the true art for such popular display is to continue the best forms for appearing to say something new, when in reality you are but echoing yourself; to break up massy chords into running vibrations, and to mask by slight differences in the manner a verbal identity in the substance.'

As a rule, an excess of connectives is enfeebling. Thus:

The Academy set up by Cardinal Richelieu, to amuse the wits of that age and country, and divert them from raking into his politics and ministry, brought this into vogue; and the French wits have, for this last age, been wholly turned to the refinement of their style and language; and, indeed, with such success that it can hardly be equalled, and runs equally through their verse and prose.—*Temple*.

Omission of the conjunction favors that rapidity which marks and imparts energy. Note the almost simultaneous connection of cause and effect:

For there is wrath gone out from the Lord — the plague is begun.  
—*Numbers*.

What a concentration of calamity:

And every eye  
Glared light'ning, and short pernicious fire,  
Among th' accursed, that wither'd all their strength,  
And of their wonted vigor left them *drain'd*,  
*Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen*.—*Milton*.

Observe the fine effect of asyndeton in the following:

One effort, one to break the circling host,  
They *form, unite, charge, waver* — all is lost!—*Byron*.

On the other hand, emphasis not seldom requires the multiplication of these particles. It may be desired to make the mind rest on each of the objects enumerated:

Love was not in their looks, either to God,  
Or to each other, but apparent guilt,  
And shame, and perturbation, and despair.  
Anger and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.—*Milton*.

The violations of conciseness are:

1. *Tautology*, or the useless repetition of the same sense in different words:

Never did Atticus succeed better in gaining the *universal* love and esteem of *all* men.—*Spectator*.

Particularly, as to the affairs of this world, integrity hath many advantages over all the fine and artificial ways of *dissimulation* and *deceit*; it is much the *plainer* and *easier*, much the *safer* and *more secure* way of dealing with the world; it has less of *trouble* and *difficulty*, of *entanglement* and *perplexity*, of *danger* and *hazard* in it. The arts of *deceit* and *cunning* do continually grow weaker, and less *effectual* and *serviceable* to them that use them.—*Tillotson*.

2. *Pleonasm*, which is not so much a useless repetition of sense as a mere superfluity of expression:

I went home full of a *great many* serious reflections.—*Guardian*.

If he happens to have any leisure *upon his hands*.—*Spectator*.

He saw that *the reason why* witchcraft was ridiculed *was*, because it was a phase of the miraculous.—*Lecky*.

Until this be altered for the better, I do not see that we are likely to grow much wiser, or *that* though political power may pass into different hands, *that* it will be exercised more purely or sensibly than it has been.—*Dr. Arnold*.

3. *Verbosity*, or unnecessary profuseness, to remedy which it is often necessary to re-cast as well as to blot. It differs from pleonasm and tautology in being more pervasive. Forms of it are *prolixity*, the enumeration of things either trivial, or so obvious that they might better have been left to the reader to supply; *paraphrase*, a too diffuse explanation of something difficult or obscure; *circumlocution*, a roundabout mode of speech, allowable only when direct assertion might be offensive, or for the sake of variety or emphasis. Euphemism often takes the form of the last, as in the following, commended by Longinus: 'The appointed journey,' for *death*; 'The fallen are borne forth publicly by the state,' that is *buried*. What has been said requires the further caution, that the coupling of synonymous words and phrases is admissible either to put greater stress on prominent points or to explain an obscure term by one that is clear. A sentence is to be judged with reference to both thought and

impression. The lengthened 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' expresses more, and expresses it more vividly, than the direct 'Shall not God do right?' The first serves as an argument in support of the sentiment, since it represents the Deity in a character to which injustice is peculiarly unsuitable. The fault to be chiefly guarded against is the repetition of trite and unimpressive forms.

The importance of attention to *order*, with a view to perspicuity, has already been noticed. Energy, in arrangement, depends (1) on the right disposition of the capital parts. The more emphatic ideas should be expressed in the more emphatic positions, which are, in general, the beginning and the end of the sentence, especially the latter. Unless otherwise determined by the thought, the movement should be from the weakest or least striking statements to those which are stronger, the strongest being reserved for the last. The following are improvable:

His government gave courage to the English barons to carry farther their opposition.—*Hume*.

There will be few in the next generation who will not at least be able to write and read.—*Addison*.

Yet this, like all unusual methods, can only be occasionally employed.—*Dr. Bascom*.

The temperament of our language is phlegmatic, like that of our climate.—*Dr. Campbell*.

All these — the third excepted — answer well enough the requirements of clearness; but all would be strengthened by a different collocation:

His government gave courage to the English barons to carry their opposition farther.

There will be few in the next generation who will not be able at least to read and write.

Yet this, like all unusual methods, can be employed only occasionally.

The temperament of our language, like that of our climate, is phlegmatic.

(2) on the preservation of unity, the subserviency of every part to one principal affirmation. The usual precepts—to be received, however, with limitations—are: not to shift the scene in the course of the same sentence; not to crowd into one sentence ideas which have no natural connection with the leading proposition; not to add clauses after a full and perfect close; to avoid an excess of parentheses. These faults can be perceived in the following:

Ojeda sent his stolen gold and Indians home to Saint Domingo, in order that more men and supplies might in return be despatched to him; and he inaugurated the building of his new town by a foray into the territories of a neighboring Indian chief, who was reported to possess much gold.—*Helps*.

And here it was often found of absolute necessity to influence or cool the passions of the audience, especially at Rome, where Tully spoke; and with whose writings young divines, I mean those among them who read old authors, are more conversant than with those of Demosthenes; who, by many degrees, excelled the other, at least as an orator.—*Swift*.

The next day upon the plains, Dr. Henchman, one of the prebends of Salisbury, met the king, the Lord Wilmot and Philips then leaving him to go to the sea-coast to find a vessel, the doctor conducting the king to a place called Heale, three miles from Salisbury, belonging then to Sergeant Hyde, who was afterwards Chief-Justice of the King's Bench, and then in possession of the widow of his elder brother; a house that stood alone from neighbors and from any highway, where, coming in late, he supped with some gentlemen that were accidentally in the house which could not very well be avoided.—*Clarendon*.

There are few principles of energy which are not violated by one or more of these passages. The remedy, in all such cases, lies in transposition or resolution, or in both. The disjointed or overcrowded sentence should be broken up into distinct and more congruous ones; the prominent in idea should be prominent in position; particles should

be concealed in the middle; a significant and pregnant word or phrase should conclude the assertion. Youthful writers not infrequently commit the error of combining in one sentence irrelevant materials—an error which Artemas Ward burlesques by saying, ‘I am an early riser, *but* my wife is a Presbyterian.’ Of course, attention absorbed in the search for relations that do not exist is so much abstracted from relations that do exist. One looks in vain for the point of connection, looking at nothing, yet struggling to see something. It should be added that the parenthesis, which may or may not be indicated by the curves, may, if not too long, too frequent, or too irrelevant, be of great value for emphasis or explanation. Thus:

Some of his own works show that he had at times strong, excellent common sense; and that he had the virtue of charity to a high degree is indubitable; but his friends (of whom he made woful choice) have taken care to let the world know that in behavior he was an ill-natured bear, and in opinions as senseless a bigot as an old washerwoman—a brave composition for a philosopher!—*Horace Walpole on Dr. Johnson.*

It should also be borne in mind that different particulars, however numerous, are not objectionable if kept in due subordination to the chief idea or statement:

He urged to him that the desperate situation of the Duke of Normandy made it requisite for that prince to bring matters to a speedy decision, and put his whole fortune on the issue of battle, but that the king of England, in his own country, beloved by his own subjects, provided with every supply, had more certain and less dangerous means of insuring to himself the victory; that the Norman troops, elated, on the one hand, with the highest hopes, and seeing, on the other, no resource in case of a discomfiture, would fight to the last extremity, and being the flower of all the warriors on the Continent, must be regarded as formidable to the English; that if their first fire, which is always the most dangerous, were allowed to languish for want of action, if they were harassed with small skirmishes, shortened in provisions, and fatigued with the bad weather

and deep roads during the winter season, which was approaching, they must fall an easy and bloodless prey to their enemy; that if a general action were delayed, the English, sensible of the imminent danger to which their properties as well as liberties were exposed from those rapacious invaders, would hasten from all quarters to his assistance, and would render his army invincible; that at least, if he thought it necessary to hazard a battle, he ought not to expose his own person, but reserve, in case of disastrous accidents, some resource to the liberty and independence of the kingdom; and that having once been so unfortunate as to be constrained to swear, and that upon the holy relics, to support the pretensions of the Duke of Normandy, it were better that the command of the army should be intrusted to another, who, not being bound by those sacred ties, might give the soldiers more assured hopes of a prosperous issue to the combat.—*Hume*.

The last example brings us again to the division of sentences into periodic and loose. The former, concentrating its force at a point, gives strength and dignity, but is too stately for the highest energy. The latter, being easier, less obtrusive, and more consonant with the spontaneous action of thought, must be the staple of composition. Finally, the unity of the paragraph or of the essay, like that of the sentence, implies the presence of one governing image, around which facts group themselves in progressive transition, according to their relative value and pertinence.

From the previous consideration of figures, it is evident that they conduce much to energy of expression by contributing to distinctness, to emphasis, to variety, and to conciseness. What has been said and exemplified elsewhere, in detail, may, so far as it relates to the present point, be summed up, illustratively, as follows:

He struck me as much like a steam-engine in trowsers.—*Sidney Smith on Daniel Webster*.

The head is on the block—the axe rushes—dumb lies the world; that wild, yelling world with all its madness is behind thee.—*Carlyle*.



God puts our prayers like rose-leaves between the leaves of his book of remembrance, and when the volume is opened at last, there shall be a precious fragrance springing from them.—*Spurgeon*.

Life is not as idle ore,  
But iron dug from central gloom,  
And heated hot with burning fears,  
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,  
And batter'd with the shocks of doom,  
To shape and use.—*Tennyson*.

The placing of the words in a sentence resembles, in some degree, the disposition of the figures in a historic piece. As the principal figure ought to have that situation in the picture which will, at the first glance, fix the eye of the spectator, so the emphatical word ought to have that place in the sentence which will give it the greatest advantage for fixing the attention of the hearer.—*Dr. Campbell*.

*Climax* is a symbol of cumulation, and cumulation is force. *Contrast*, besides saving words, is intrinsically energetic. Of two contrasted ideas, each is a mirror to the other, and a mirror gives vision. Few simple expedients are so effective as *Interrogation*, which, inviting silent rejoinder, makes the hearer active in the reception of truth. Did you never see lips move or heads nod or shake in answer to a speaker's question? *Hyperbole* is a favorite figure among energetic writers. The life-giving power of the figure of *Vision* is splendidly illustrated in some of the sacred prophecies. A Boston preacher once electrified an assembly by apostrophising Voltaire as being in the world of the lost: 'What think you, what think you, Voltaire, of Christianity now?' *Soliloquy* is of the nature of apostrophe, and both are employed by the most passionate forms of eloquence. Massillon, preaching on the text, 'Are there few that be saved?' after seeming to restrict to a narrow, a narrower, and the narrowest limit the number of the elect, broke out with, 'O God, where are thine elect?' The whole audience are said to have sprung to their feet,

## EXERCISES.

Criticise and amend:

1. It is the vividness of the ideas presented which arouse emotion, and thus *carry* over conviction into persuasion.—*Dr. Buscom.*

2. Violations of simplicity, whatever the type, show either that *the mind* of the writer is tainted with affectation, or *else* that *an effort is making* to conceal conscious poverty of sentiment, under *loftiness* of expression.<sup>1</sup>—*Dr. Townsend.*

3. Redundancy is *sometimes* permissible for the surer conveyance of meaning, for emphasis, and *in the language* of poetic embellishment.<sup>2</sup>—*Alfred Ayres.*

4. I find several noteworthy examples of bad diction *in an article* in a recent number of an Australian magazine.—*Ibid.*

5. Indeed, the impartial critic who will take the trouble to examine any of Mr. Emerson's essays at all carefully, is quite sure to come to the conclusion that Mr. Emerson has seen everything he has ever made the subjects of his essays very much as London is from the top of Saint Paul's in a fog.—*Ibid.*

(The fog, it will occur to most, is before the eyes of Mr. Ayres.)

6. Be this objection valid, or be it not, 'cultured' having but two syllables, while its synonym 'cultivated' has four, it is likely to find favor with those who employ short words when they convey their meaning as well as long ones.—*Ibid.*

7. I do not trumpet water as an infallible nostrum—as a universal panacea for all the ills that flesh is heir to.—*J. S. Blackie.*

8. It was almost intolerable to be borne.—*Hawthorne.*

9. We are both agreed that the sentence was wrong.—*Buckle.*

10. His first appearance in the fashionable world at London, from whence he came lately to Bath.—*Smollet.*

11. Perhaps we might venture to add that it is hardly explicable, except as a portrait drawn by a skillful hand guided by love, and by love intensified by the consciousness of some impassable barrier.—*Leslie Stephen.*

12. Our sight is the most perfect, and most delightful of all our senses.—*Addison.*

<sup>1</sup> *The Art of Speech.*

<sup>2</sup> *Verbalist.*

13. A monarchy, limited like ours, may be placed, for aught I know, as it has been often represented, just in the middle point, from whence a deviation leads, on the one hand, to tyranny, and on the other, to anarchy.—*Bolingbroke*.

14. Though the work was prepared for pupils of an advanced grade, and has been written in a style adapted to their comprehension, yet it was deemed of primary importance to set forth every point perspicuously and intelligibly.—*Quackenbos*.

15. Beauty does not afford the imagination so high a degree of pleasure as sublimity; but, characterizing a greater variety of objects than the latter quality, it is a more fruitful source of gratification to that faculty.—*Ibid*.

16. That people, after they had once begun, pursued the business vigorously, and with all imaginable contempt of the government; and though in the hubbub of the first day there appeared nobody of name and reckoning, but the actors were really of the dregs of the people, yet they discovered by the countenance of that day that few men of rank were forward to engage themselves on behalf of the bishops, whereupon more considerable persons every day appeared against them as heretofore in the case of St. Paul—Acts xiii, 50: 'The Jews stirred up devout and honorable women,'—the women and ladies of the best quality declared themselves of the party, and, with all the reproaches imaginable, made war upon the bishops as introducers of popery and superstition, against which they avowed themselves to be irreconcilable enemies, and their husbands did not long defer the owning of the same spirit, insomuch that within a few days the bishops durst not appear in the streets, nor in any courts or houses, but were in danger of their lives; and such of the lords as durst be in their company, or seemed to desire to rescue them from violence, had their persons assaulted, insomuch that they were glad to send for some of those great men who did, indeed, govern the rabble, though they appeared not in it, who readily came, and redeemed them out of their hands, so that by the time new orders came from England there was scarce a bishop left in Edinburgh, and not a minister who durst read the Liturgy in any church.—*Lord Clarendon*.

## CHAPTER VI.

### METHODS OF EXPRESSION—ELEGANCE.

The flowers of rhetoric are only acceptable when backed by the evergreens of truth and sense.—MACAULAY.

Rhythm in prose should be cultivated not only for the sake of embellishment, but also for the sake of perspicuity.—BULWER.

Words have a separate effect on the mind abstracted from their signification and from their imitative power: they are more or less agreeable to the ear, by the fulness, sweetness, faintness, or roughness of their tones.—KAMES.

**E**LEGANCE is in discourse what refinement is in manners, or carriage and dress in the figure of a woman of fashion. It is opposed to the vulgar and the trivial, the clumsy and the awkward. It is that quality which gives pleasure, as distinguished from that which gives instruction or impressiveness or force. Though less important than either perspicuity or energy, it is not to be disregarded. Minds are influenced by what is agreeable, as well as by what is reasonable; and in proportion as those addressed have richness and delicacy of feeling, matter and manner must combine to make the product beautiful. Elegance of expression implies refinement in the choice and arrangement of words. It depends upon:

1. *Euphony*, the use of pleasant-sounding words—words, generally speaking, in which there is either a preponderance of vowels and liquids or a due intermixture of vowels and consonants; hence words that are easily pronounced. Compare lowlily, inexplicableness, soothedst, stretched, barefacedness—with merrily, demeanor, celerity, bridal, alternative, degree, repent,

wonderful, impetuosity. The following are examples of euphonic beauty:

And neither the angels in heaven above,  
Nor the demons down under the sea,  
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.—*Poe*.

Airs, vernal airs,  
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune  
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,  
Knit with the graces and the hours in dance,  
Led on the eternal spring.—*Milton*.

The voice within us is more distinctly audible in the stillness of the place; and the gentler affections of our nature spring up more freshly in its tranquillity and sunshine—nurtured by the healthy principle which we inhale with the pure air, and invigorated by the genial influences which descend into the heart from the quiet of the sylvan solitude around, and the soft serenity of the sky above.—*Longfellow*.

2. *Rhythm*, the regular recurrence of accents and pauses at such intervals as shall produce an agreeable rise and fall of tone. It is a principle of proportion introduced into language, according to which words are so chosen and arranged as not only to express the meaning, but also to appeal to the musical sensibility. The 'rests,' in particular, should be so distributed as neither to exhaust the breath by their distance from each other, nor to require constant cessations of voice by their frequency. What is easy to the organs of speech will, as a rule, be delightful to the ear. It is desirable, moreover, that the sound should grow to the last, the longest members and the most sonorous terms being, in general, retained for the close. Herein the requirements of energy and melody agree. Observe, in the following passages, how the sense is reinforced by the rhythmical flow. In parts, as will be indicated, the movement becomes metrical:

Or ever the silver cord be loosed—or the golden bowl be broken—or the pitcher broken at the fountain—or the wheel broken at the cistern.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was—and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.—*Bible*.

The boat reappeared, but brother and sister had gone down in an embrace never to be parted; living through again, in one supreme moment, *the days when they had clasped their little hands in love; and roamed the daisied fields together.*—*George Eliot*.

3. *Harmony*, from the Greek, signifying to fit together; the just adaptation of one thing to another. Thus defined, it comprehends the general appropriateness of diction to the subject and end of discourse; the similar construction of corresponding parts, as in balanced and antithetical sentences; the right relation of parts to each other and to the whole. Low comedy must not take the place of sober discussion; nor pompous assertion, of simple statement. A letter should not be written in the stately manner of an oration. The grave, the gay, the solemn, the merry, the sublime, the pleasant,—should each be brought forth in its own specific features and coloring. Where, also, members are coördinate and have a common dependence; where either resemblance or opposition is intended to be expressed, there should be a resemblance in construction, in language, or in both. The skilful handling of every part, again, so that there may be neither excess nor deficiency of treatment, is essential to success; but the management of the theme as a whole—the steady working out of the main idea—is even a more requisite excellence, while it is a more costly one. Finally, it is occasionally possible—in prose less often than in poetry—to assist the meaning and to heighten the pleasure by making the sound an echo to the sense. Observe how Milton imitates the grating noise of the opening of hell-gates:

On a sudden, open fly  
 With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,  
 The infernal doors; and on their hinges grate  
 Harsh thunder.

Contrast with this the opening of heaven's doors:

Heaven opened wide  
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound,  
 On golden hinges turning.

Melancholy and gloomy subjects naturally express themselves in long words and slow measures:

In those deep solitudes and awful cells,  
 Where heavenly pensive contemplation dwells.—*Pope.*

A combination difficult to pronounce is suited to the description of labored movement, while an opposite arrangement corresponds to rapidity of motion. Thus Homer and his English translators suggest, by a succession of aspirates, the labor of Sisyphus:

With many a weary step, and many a groan,  
 Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone.

Then the descent:

The huge round stone, resulting with a bound,  
 Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the ground.

Heaviness and stupidity are similarly indicated:

Just writes to make his barrenness appear,  
 And *strains from hard-bound brains* six lines a year.—*Pope.*

The uproar of battle is thus described:

Arms on armor clashing bray'd  
 Horrible discord, and the madding wheels  
 Of brazen chariots rag'd; dire was the noise  
 Of conflict; overhead the dismal hiss  
 Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew.—*Milton.*

Poe's *Song of the Bells* is full of onomatopoeic words, all illustrative of harmony. One almost sees and hears the

Sledges with the bells —  
Silver bells —

What a world of merriment their melody foretells!  
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,  
In the icy ear of night!

And then

The mellow wedding bells,  
Golden bells!

Tennyson thus happily suggests the varying sounds of a flowing brook:

I chatter over stony ways  
In little sharps and trebles;  
I bubble into eddying bays,  
I babble at the pebbles.  
  
I chatter, chatter, as I go  
To join the brimming river;  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on forever.

How exquisitely does the same poet, in *Lotos-Eaters*, represent the dreamy haze of the enchanted land, and the sleepiness, the gluttoned weariness, of those who feed upon the lotos. Every stanza is a symbol of satiety.

4. *Variety*. In the works of nature, as in flowers and landscapes, and in the works of art which are intended to please, this is the prevailing characteristic. Perpetual sameness leads to monotony, and monotony is painful. To have only one tune or measure is little better than to have none. Subject to the more important considerations of meaning and force, the diction should be varied; there should be a due alternation of phrases with clauses; of long members and sentences with short ones; of the natural order with the inverted; of emphatic with unemphatic words; of abrupt with swelling terminations.

5. *Imagery*. Figures of speech nearly all tend to embellishment, as well as to illustration or emphasis. This effect is manifested chiefly, however, by comparison,



allusion, and metaphor. But sentiment and thought constitute the real and lasting merit of a production. Figurative language, in order to be beautiful, must rise from the subject, of its own accord, and must not be used too frequently. Nothing is more surfeiting than redundant ornaments of any kind.

6. *Quotation.* Discourse can be made clearer, stronger, and more attractive, by the proper use of anecdotes and sayings, of historical and literary allusions, and of extracts from reputable authors. The following are examples:

Devoured by worms, like Herod, was the town,  
Because, like Herod, it had ruthlessly  
Slaughtered the Innocents.<sup>1</sup>—*Longfellow.*

The main secret of Macaulay's success lay in this, that to extraordinary fluency and facility he united patient, minute, and persistent diligence. He well knew, as Chaucer knew before him, that,—

There is na workeman  
That can bothe worken wel and hastilie.  
This must be done at leisure parfaitlie.

If his method of composition ever comes into fashion, books probably will be better, and undoubtedly will be shorter.—*Trevelyan.*

Some of the offences against elegance are:

1. The needless use of words that are hard to pronounce; such, for example, as contain a cumulation of consonants, or recurrence of the same sound, or a succession of short unaccented syllables.

2. The commencing of successive words with the same letter or syllable.

The rules of emphasis come *in in* interruption of your supposed general law of position.—*Dean Alford.*

3. The careless repetition of words at short intervals; an offence from which the best writers are not altogether

<sup>1</sup>Of a tract of country troubled with insects because the people had killed the birds.

free, and which those who write hastily can seldom avoid:

A large *supply* of mules was obtained to *supply* the great destruction of those useful animals.—*Sir Archibald Alison*.

Every morning *setting* a worthy example to his men by *setting* fire, with his own monster hands, to the house where he had slept last night.—*Dickens*.

Pronouns and synonyms may be employed to vary the language. Where any given word, however, is best adapted to convey the meaning, it should be used. The variation should not seem forced, as it does in the following example:

He was just one of those men *that* the country can't afford to lose, and *whom* it is so very hard to replace.—*Anthony Trollope*.

4. The splitting of particles, as the separation of a preposition from the noun which it governs:

I have often spoken to you upon matters kindred *to*, or at any rate not distantly connected *with*; my subject for Easter.—*Helps*.

We may here call attention to the inelegance, and the solecism as well, of inserting an adverb between the components of an infinitive:

He's not the man *to tamely acquiesce*.—*Browning*.

*To fairly understand* this, consider the minor poetry of our own times.—*E. C. Stedman*.

5. The purposeless change of phraseology or construction where the parts are coördinate, contrasted, or responsive. This conflicts with symmetry, causes an unpleasant jar, and thus diverts attention.

We could see *the lake* over the woods, two or three miles ahead, and *that* the river made an abrupt turn southward.—*Thoreau*.

The *laughers* will be for those who have most wit; the serious *part of mankind*, for those who have most reason *on their side*.—*Bolingbroke*.

There may remain a suspicion that *we* over-rate the greatness of his genius, in the same manner as *bodies* appear gigantic on account of their being disproportioned and mis-shapen.<sup>1</sup>—*Hume on Shakespeare.*

6. The inordinate length of a member, or the tiresome distribution of pauses. Compare:

But now we must admit the shortcomings, the fallacies, the defects as no less essential elements in forming a sound judgment as to whether the seer and artist were so united as to justify the claim first put in by himself and afterward maintained by his sect to a place beside the few great poets who exalt men's minds, and give a right direction and safe outlet to their passions through the imagination, while insensibly helping them toward balance of character and serenity of judgment by stimulating their sense of proportion, form, and the nice adjustment of means to ends.—*Lowell.*

Our life would be but a poor affair without it (love), a miserable succession of present instants, with no landscape sleeping in the past, no perspective enshadowed in the future; with light to cut our corn, and fell our timber, and steer our ship, but not to play upon the waving fields, and paint the forest stems, and glance upon the sea; with an intelligible task before us, and worthy neighbors near us, but no solemn expressiveness in the one, no feature of inspiring heroism in the other; with a kindliness at heart, that would not stand still and see a creature die, but with no eye to see further than the suffering flesh, or ear to catch more than the uttered words; so that the plaint of deepest pathos is reduced to prose, dumb sorrows are uninterpreted, and the light hand of a graceful love is but a dull prehensile limb.—*Martineau.*

7. A series of equally emphatic or unemphatic monosyllables, rendering the enunciation heavy:

In the one narrative, the facts are preëminent; *but that they may be facts*, they must be the entire, the living facts, clothed as far as possible with the emotion of the hour.—*Dr. Bascom.*

<sup>1</sup> Better: There may remain a suspicion that we over-rate the greatness of his genius, in the same manner as we over-rate the magnitude of bodies on account of, etc. Or: There may remain a suspicion that the greatness of his genius is over-rated, in the same manner as bodies appear, etc.

The bad effect does not arise, however, if the accents be properly distributed:

Bless the Lord of hosts, for he is good to us.

8. Closing with a relatively insignificant or unemphatic word:

Edward obtained a dispensation from his oath, which the barons had compelled Gaveston to take, that he would abjure forever the realm.—*Hume*.

Both harmony and strength require:

Edward obtained a dispensation from his oath, which the barons had compelled Gaveston to take, that he would abjure the realm forever.

It has often, after the analogy of the Latin, been laid down as a law that an English sentence should never end with a preposition; but this arrangement accords with the genius of the language, and also has the authority of the best authors. For example, to transpose the prepositions in the following would be to render the expression more formal indeed, but much less vigorous:

He has no family to return to.—*Erskine*.

Such as few persons have a just idea of.—*Bright*.

Houses are built to live in, and not to look on.—*Bacon*.

Hath God a name to curse by? Hath God a name to blaspheme by? and hath God no name to pray by?—*Donne*.

Knowledge must be worked for, studied for, and more than all, it must be prayed for.—*Dr. Arnold*.

Such a construction sounds better than it looks; for the rhythmical effect of the unaccented word is the same as that of an unaccented syllable.

9. Mannerism, the excessive use of favorite forms; as Emerson's 'tis,' Carlyle's 'as of,' 'of him' (for *his*), and Alison's 'of all others,' 'great as.' From the latter's *History of Europe*, Mr. Breen, in *Modern English Literature*

*ture*, has culled several hundred passages in which these and other mannerisms occur.

10. Affectations and vulgarisms; want of variety; misplaced and overwrought imagery, as well as a bald or desert-like plainness of speech.

It can hardly be necessary to add that many of the principles for attaining perspicuity and energy apply equally to the attainment of elegance. Primary regard should be had to the *substance*, and when the two qualities are at variance, the energetic should be preferred to the elegant. 'Universally,' says Dr. Whately, 'a writer or speaker should endeavor to maintain the appearance of expressing himself, not, as if he *wanted to say something*; i.e., not as if he had a subject set him, and was anxious to compose the best essay or declamation on it that he could; but as if he had some ideas to which he was anxious to give utterance;—not as if he wanted to compose (for instance) a sermon, and was desirous of performing that task satisfactorily, but as if there was something in his mind which he was desirous of communicating to his hearers.'

#### EXERCISES.

Criticise and amend, pointing out the violations (if any) of perspicuity and energy, as well as those of elegance:

1. Tediousness is the most fatal of all faults.—*Dr. Johnson*.
2. The effect of the concluding verb, placed where it is, is most striking.—*Dr. Whately*.
3. It is the steady, easy hand with which its grammar is managed which carries perspicuity through a sentence.—*Dr. Bascom*.
4. Surprise and ideas are the important words in the first; surprise and things in the second definition.—*Ibid*.
5. The first cannot be exposed by argument, being already opposed to it. They can only be met by pointing out the ridiculous figure they make when viewed in the light of reason.—*Ibid*.

6. The matter employed in amplification is never, nor in any degree, to be treated as independent.—*A. D. Hepburn.*

7. That is the best disposition which (provided the virtue of adaptation is not neglected) exhibits the theme from different points of view, and contains those main thoughts the development of which affords the greatest variety of new and important truths.—*Ibid.*

8. God has put something noble and good into every heart which his hand has created.—*Mark Twain.*

9. Goethe says that Shakespeare's characters are like watches with dial-plates of transparent crystal—they show you the hour like others, and the inward mechanism also is visible.—*Carlyle.*

10. I can feel very little ambition to follow you through your ordinary routine of pettifogging objections and barefaced assertions, the only difficulty of making which is to throw aside all regard to truth and decency, and the only difficulty in answering them is to overcome one's contempt for the writer.—*Fielding.*

11. Now, too, there was his temporary alliance with Kossuth, the arrival of whom in England, and the extraordinary eloquence and subtlety of his speeches in English, were a public topic for many months.—*David Masson.*

12. Every strong and every weak point of those who might probably be his rivals were laid down on his charts.—*O. W. Holmes.*

13. Ministers had information of their designs from the information of Edwards.—*Alison.*

14. The secret spring of all his actions was a deep and manly feeling of piety which pervaded all his actions.—*Ibid.*

15. It would seem as if in the very disposition of the seats, it had been intended to point to the intended union of the Orders.—*Ibid.*

16. He was left with her injunctions, and the spirit of the oracle, though the divinity was no longer visible, pervaded his life and mind.—*Disraeli.*

17. That he should be in earnest it is hard to conceive; since any reasons of doubt which he might have in this case would have been reasons of doubt in the case of other men, who may give more, but cannot give more evident, signs of thought than their fellow-creatures.—*Bolingbroke.*

18. One may have an air which proceeds from a just sufficiency

and knowledge of the matter before him, which may naturally produce some motions of his head and body, which might become the bench better than the bar.—*Guardian*.

19. The sharks, who prey upon the inadvertency of young heirs, are more pardonable than those who trespass upon the good opinion of those who treat with them upon the foot of choice and respect.—*Ibid*.

20. His own notions were always good; but he was a man of great expense.—*Burnet*.

21. Joseph desired to alight, and that he might have a bed prepared for him.—*Fielding*.

22. I pray you, tarry all night, lodge here, that thy heart may be merry.—*Bible*.

23. This being admitted, it appears to me highly probable that they were primarily construed as such, joined either with the nominative or the objective case, as the verbs had either a transitive or intransitive meaning; and that they were followed by either single words or clauses.—*Crombie*.

24. I saw simple Sloth and Presumption lie asleep, a little out of the way, as I came, with irons upon their heels; but do you think I could awake them? I also saw Formality and Hypocrisy come tumbling over the wall, to go (as they pretended) to Zion; but they were quickly lost, even as I myself did tell them; but they would not believe; but above all, I found it hard work to get up this hill, and as hard to come by the lions' mouths; and truly if it had not been for the good man, the Porter that stands at the gate, I do not know but that, after all, I might have gone back again; but now, I thank God, I am here, and I thank you for receiving me.—*Bunyan*.

## CHAPTER VII.

### METHODS OF EXPRESSION — SUPPLEMENTAL AIDS.

The genius of an author consists in designing well and pointing well. — LA BRUYÈRE.

The elements which enter into the composition of the highest bodies are subtle and inconsiderable. The rudiments of every art and science exhibit, at first, to a learner, the appearance of littleness and insignificancy; and it is by attending to such reflections as to a superficial observer would appear minute and hypercritical, that language must be improved and eloquence perfected. — LORD CAMPBELL.

WITH the best arrangement of recorded words there is need of additional facilities for the effective communication of thought. Particularly is this true in English, where the relations of constituent parts are not determined by inflection, but almost wholly by position. Observe the otherwise inevitable obscurity of sentences.

As a sad and hideous sight it was; yet one too common even then in those remoter districts, where the humane edicts were disregarded, which the prayers of the Dominican friars (to their everlasting honor be it spoken) had wrung from the Spanish sovereigns; and which the legislation of that most wise, virtuous and heroic inquisitor (para-

To make the sense more intelligible, spaces are introduced, the size of the letters is varied, and certain marks are inserted, indicating the syntax, and corresponding more or less closely to the pauses made in speaking. Thus:

A sad and hideous sight it was; yet one too common even then in those remoter districts, where the humane edicts were disregarded, which the prayers of Dominican friars (to their everlasting honor be it spoken) had wrung from the Spanish sovereigns; and which the legislation of that most wise, virtuous and heroic inquisitor (para-



doxical as the words may seem), Pedro de la Gasca, had carried into effect in Peru.—*Kingsley*.

It is hence obvious that capitals, commas, semicolons, etc., are valuable auxiliaries, enabling the writer to distinguish or emphasize terms especially prominent or significant, and to include in a period its incidents and adjuncts, which else would form a multitude of short and distinct propositions, rendering the style very disjointed.

The all-important principle to be grasped is, that these mechanical devices, whether they consist in capitalizing a word or indenting a paragraph, are primarily guides to the construction and meaning. Thus to denote their *special* office (that is, for the sake of perspicuity), the interjection, O, and the pronoun, I, are written as capital letters. 'Lectures' and 'art' are common nouns, and 'lectures on art' may be a common phrase; but if the combination be used to designate an individual object, it becomes a proper noun, and this preëminent use of it calls for a peculiar form; as, Taine's Lectures on Art, Taine's *Lectures on Art*, or Taine's 'Lectures on Art.' Similarly, while in the body of a letter we write friend, father, brother, sister, in the complimentary address both conspicuity and importance require Friend, Father, Brother, Sister. There is a distinction between middle age and the Middle Age; between a revolution in politics and the Revolution of 1776; between the reformation of Gough and the Reformation of Luther; between He is bold, and Charles the Bold. Referring to created things, pronouns are begun with small letters—except in initial positions; but, referring to the Creator, with capitals, yet only when necessary to make the reference clear:

And I will trust that he who heeds  
The life that hides in mead and wold,  
Who hangs yon alder's crimson beads,  
And stains these mosses green and gold,

Will still, as he hath done, incline  
His gracious ear to me and mine.—*Whittier*.

Behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.  
—*Lowell*.

Again, one use of 'too' is represented thus:

Thilke same kidde (as I can well devise)  
Was too very foolish and unwise.—*Spenser*.

Another:

They will, too, interest not merely children but grown-up people.  
—*Westminster Review*.

Taken adverbially, 'however' will be written:

Illusions, however innocent, are deadly as the canker-worm.—*Froude*.

Conjunctively:

We prefer him, however, as he is interpreted to us by the engraver.—*Spectator*.

Note the difference between, 'What can the devil speak true?' and,

What, can the devil speak true?—*Shakespeare*.

Or between, 'There is nothing more wonderful than a book,' and,

Except a living man, there is nothing more wonderful than a book!—*Kingsley*.

Though both are declarative in form, the second reveals more of the force of conviction than the first. Even where the form is exclamatory, the exclamation-point may or may not be hoisted as a signal, according to the degree of energy or emotion thrown into the utterance or sought to be conveyed:

When we coveted a cheap luxury (and O! how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times!) we were used to have a debate two or three days before.—*Lamb*.

How pretty

Her blushing was, and how she blushed again.—*Tennyson*.

A parenthetical expression—one that serves merely for illustration—will, in general, be discriminated from a restrictive expression—one vitally connected with the element modified:

(1) Man, *who is born of woman*, is of few days and full of trouble.—*Job*.

(2) It [reading] calls for no bodily exertion, *of which he has had enough or too much*. It relieves his home of its dulness and sameness, *which . . . is what drives him out to the ale-houses*.—*Sir John Herschel*.

(3) *Let the half-witted say what they will of delusions*, no thorough reader ever ceased to believe in his books, *whatever doubts they might have taught him by the way*.—*Leigh Hunt*.

(4) A book is a sure friend, *always ready at your first leisure*.—*Emerson*.

(5) The moment any book, *even the greatest*, takes the place to us of insight and inward seeing of the truth, that moment it becomes an injury.—*Ibid*.

In all the foregoing the italicized portions are explicative. In (1) the relative clause is simply illustrative, pointing out some circumstance connected with the antecedent yet leaving that antecedent with its full extent of meaning,—*all men*. Each of the clauses in (2) could be omitted without changing the essence of the assertion to which it pertains. The leading thought of (3) is true in just the same sense, whether the clauses be retained or omitted. In (4) the final phrase only unfolds what is implied in 'sure.' 'Even the greatest' adds nothing essential—it is contained in 'any.' Contrast with these the following:

(1) That man lives twice that lives the first life well.—*Herrick*.

(2) I know that all words which are signs of complex ideas, furnish matter of mistake and cavil.—*Bolingbroke*.

(3) They [books] are pleasures too palpable and too habitual for him to deny.—*Hunt*.

(4) Whoever expresses to us a just thought makes ridiculous the pains of the critic who should tell him where such a word has been said before.—*Emerson*.

(5) The highest morality of a great work of art depends upon the power with which the essential beauty and ugliness of virtue and vice are exhibited by an impartial observer.—*Leslie Stephen*.

Here, all modifying elements are determinative. Not every man lives twice, but only such as live the first life well. A comma between the antecedent and relative of (2) would pervert the author's meaning, for it would then appear, not that some words furnish matter of cavil, but that *all* do so. Not all pleasures are affirmed of books, but a certain class. In (4) and (5) every clause, every phrase, is essential to the meaning of the whole. No marks are admissible, for every modifier is closely connected, logically and positionally, with the element modified. Compare, however, the following:

(1) *Of all our senses*, sight is the most perfect and the most delightful.—*Bain*.

(2) Thought is the most volatile *of all things*.—*Emerson*.

(3) I hate a style, as I do a garden, that is wholly flat and regular.—*Shenstone*.

(4) He [Carlyle] wants altogether the plastic imagination, the shaping faculty, which would have made him a poet in the highest sense.—*Lowell*.

(1) and (2) are constructed alike. In both, the adjuncts are restrictive, but the transposed order in (1) makes the comma necessary. In (3) an explanatory clause is thrust in between 'style' and 'that.' The latter introduces an important limitation of the former; but omit either comma, and the meaning is wholly changed. There being in (4) a comma after 'imagination,' the common dependence of 'which' (though restrictive) upon the two antecedents is best shown by a point after 'faculty.'

It is thus seen not only that judgment determines the

relations which marks of punctuation indicate, but that the application of a principle varies according to circumstances. This will appear more satisfactorily by the fuller consideration of a single case—the appositive.

(1) Weeping again the king *my father's* wreck.—*Shakespeare*.

(2) How pleasant it is to reflect that the greatest lovers of books have *themselves* become books!—*Hunt*.

(3) My father *Shandy* solaced himself with Bruscombille.—*Hazlitt*.

(4) The diffusion of these silent teachers, *books*, through the whole community, is to work greater effects than artillery, machinery, and legislation.—*Channing*.

(5) Do not fear that I shall read you a homily on that hackneyed theme — *contentment*.—*Carlyle*.

(6) I sit down to it as I should to a strange dish, — *turn and pick out a bit here and there*.—*Hazlitt*.

(7) I 'take mine ease at mine inn,' beside the blazing hearth, and shake hands with Signor Orlando Friscobaldo [*a character in one of Dekkar's plays*], as the oldest acquaintance I have.—*Ibid*.

(8) There are Robinson Crusoes in the moral as well as physical world, and even a universalist may be one of them;—*men cast on desert islands of thought and speculation*.—*Hunt*.

(9) Wondrous indeed is the virtue of a true book! . . . Yearly comes its new produce of leaves (*commentaries, deductions, . . . journalistic essays*), every one of which is talismanic.—*Carlyle*.

In (1), (2), and (3), the appositive coalesces readily with the rest of the sentence. In (4), though but a single word, it is interruptive. In (5) it is preceded by a dash, as more formal and emphatic. In (6) its greater length seems to justify the addition of a comma. In (7) it consists of words not the writer's, and therefore is enclosed by brackets. In (8), in view of its remoteness from 'Crusoes' and the comma after 'world,' the semicolon and the dash were, perhaps, deemed preferable for distinctness. In (9) the specifications must be set off by

dashes or curves, else they would appear to be coördinate with the subject.

From all of which it is evident that the principles of capitalization and punctuation are not without subtlety, and that habits of reflection are requisite for the just application of them. It is equally clear that no system can provide for every case that may arise, and that a mastery of the fundamentals of construction is worth more than a set of formulas loaded with exceptions — that a knowledge based upon principle is better than a knowledge based upon rules. Of these we shall attempt to state and exemplify only the most important.

1. Begin with capitals: every sentence (*a*); every line of poetry (*b*); every direct quotation — one entire or complete, and not introduced by a conjunction (*c*, *d*); formal statements, propositions separately numbered (*e*, *f*); illustrative examples (quotations, or assumed to be such), if sentences (*g*, *h*); proper names, hence also names of months and days, leading words in titles of books and essays, and all appellations of the Deity (*i*, *j*, *k*, *l*); proper adjectives (*m*); names of things vividly personified (*n*); titles of office and honor when embodied in proper names, or, as a rule, when used alone in address (*o*, *p*, *q*); the pronoun I, the interjection O, and (though not always) single letters forming abbreviations, should be capitals (*r*, *s*).

(*a*) Books are the true Elysian fields where the spirits of the dead converse, and into these fields a mortal may venture unappalled.—*Alexander Smith*.

(*b*) Who breathes must suffer, and who thinks must mourn;  
And he alone is blessed who ne'er was born.—*Prior*.

(*c*) Petrarch said of his books considered as his friends: 'I have friends whose society is extremely agreeable to me: they are of all ages, and of every country.'—*Professor C. F. Richardson*.

(d) Possibly, too, you may have heard it said that the course of centuries has changed all this; and that 'the true University of our days is a Collection of Books.'—*Carlyle*.

(e) I pity the man who can travel from Dan to Beersheba, and cry, 'Tis all barren.—*Sterne*.

(f) My lord, the new way of ideas, and the old way of speaking intelligibly, was always, and ever will be, the same. And if I may take the liberty to declare my sense of it, herein it consists: (1) That a man use no words but such as he makes the signs of certain determined objects of his mind in thinking, which he can make known to another. (2) Next, that he use the same word steadily for the sign of the same immediate object of his mind in thinking. (3) That he join those words together in propositions, according to the grammatical rules of that language he speaks in. (4) That he unite those sentences in a coherent discourse.—*Locke*.

(g) The distinction was that *yea* and *nay* were answers to questions framed in the affirmative; as, Will he go?—*Marsh*.

(h) When from sudden and intense emotion, we give utterance to some abrupt, inverted, or elliptical expression, we are said to use an exclamation; as, 'bravo,' 'dreadful,' 'the fellow,' 'what a pity!'—*Bain*.

(i) Why will you break the Sabbath of my days?—*Pope*.

(j) Men are April when they woo, December when they wed; maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives.—*Shakespeare*.

(k) I believe great authorities admit that if 'Paradise Lost' did not exist, 'Paradise Regained' would be the finest poem in our language.—*John Bright*.

(l) He who in any way shows us better than we knew before that a lily of the fields is beautiful, does he not show it us as an effluence of the Fountain of all Beauty; as the handwriting, made visible there, of the great Maker?—*Carlyle*.

(m) The noblest souls of whatever creed, the pagan Empedocles as well as Christian Paul, have insisted on the necessity of an inspiration, a living emotion, to make moral action perfect.—*Matthew Arnold*.

(n) Before the porch itself, within the jaws of Hell, Grief and avenging Care have placed their couches; there dwell pale Disease,

sorrowing Age, Despondency, and ill-prompting Hunger, and loathsome Want: . . . Death, and Labour, . . . and the iron bedchambers of the Furies and maddening Discord.—*Virgil*.

- (o) Happy is your Grace,  
That can translate the stubbornness of fortune  
Into so quiet and so sweet a style.—*Shakespeare*.
- (p) A play there is, my lord, some ten words long,  
Which is as brief as I have known a play;  
But by ten words, my lord, it is too long,  
Which makes it tedious.—*Ibid*.
- (q) My father, Earl of Cambridge, lost his head.—*Ibid*.
- (r) Listen! O listen!  
Here ever hum the golden bees.—*Lowell*.
- (s) If the world be worth thy winning,  
Think, oh! think it worth enjoying.—*Dryden*.

2. A period is put at the end of every declarative or imperative sentence; sometimes, modestly, after a sentence in the exclamatory or interrogative form (*a*, *b*); after abbreviations (*c*); after headings and sub-headings (*d*); after Roman capital and small letters used as numerals (*e*). The latter practice, however, is regarded less favorably now than formerly. Also, the period as an abbreviation mark supersedes no point except itself.

(a) What pleasure in science, in literature, in poetry, for any man who will but open his eye and his heart to take it in.—*Parker*.

(b) What would become of the finances, what of the marine, if the Whigs . . . were to manage the revenue, and Whigs who had never walked over a dock-yard, to fit out the fleet.—*Macaulay*.

(c) Water goes on contracting till it reaches the temperature of 39° Fahr., at which point the contraction ceases.—*Tyndall*.

(d) *Distribution of the Sciences*.—Science and philosophy are conversant either about mind or about matter, etc.—*Sir W. Hamilton*.

(e) Pope Celestine III., A.D. 1191, kicked the Emperor Henry VI.'s crown off his head while kneeling to show his prerogative of making and unmaking kings.—*Hayward*.



3. An interrogation-point is put after complete questions, whether asked by the writer or quoted directly (*a, b*); after elliptical questions having a common dependence (*c*); within curves to express doubt without formal denial (*d*). This point may denote any degree of separation from a comma to a period (*e*).

- (*a*)                Is it what we love, or how we love,  
                      That makes true good?—*George Eliot*.

(*b*) The barren vine says to the fruitful one, 'Is not my root as good as yours?'—*Beecher*.

(*c*) How shall a man obtain the kingdom of God? by impiety? by murder? by falsehood? by theft?—*Bible*.

(*d*) If the immortal Bacon — the wisest, greatest, meanest (?) of mankind — disgraced the judgment-seat, etc.—*Edinburgh Review*.

(*e*) And are not my leaves as green? and have I not as many bugs creeping up and down? and am I not taller than you?—*Beecher*.

4. An exclamation-point is put after sentences and parts thereof, if sufficiently emotional (*a, b*); after interjections (*c, d, e*); within curves to denote irony or contempt (*f*).

- (*a*)                Those evening bells! those evening bells!  
                      How many a tale their music tells!—*Moore*.

(*b*) Frailty, thy name is woman!—*Shakespeare*.

(*c*) Alas! how easily things go wrong!—*McDonald*.

(*d*) O fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle.—*Shakespeare*.

(*e*)        Oh! too convincing — dangerously dear —  
                      In woman's eye the unanswerable tear!—*Byron*.

(*f*) This accurate scholar (!), who went to Eton and graduated at Cambridge, has actually made a dozen grammatical mistakes within the compass of one short paragraph.

5. A colon is put between the great divisions of a sentence when subdivisions require the semicolon (*a*); before an enumeration of particulars when the particulars are formally introduced, formally given, or are separated

by semicolons (*b, c, d*); after promissory words, phrases, and propositions (*e, f, g, h*):

(*a*)        There is a world above,  
              Where parting is unknown;  
              A whole eternity of love  
              Form'd for the good alone:  
              And faith beholds the dying here  
              Translated to that happier sphere.—*Montgomery*.

(*b*)        Four things which are not in thy treasury,  
              I lay before thee, Lord, with this petition:—  
              My nothingness, my wants,  
              My sins, and my contrition.—*Southey*.

(*c*)        The improvement of the understanding is for two ends: first, for our own increase of knowledge; secondly, to enable us to deliver and make out that knowledge to others.—*Locke*.

(*d*)        Men in great place are thrice servants: servants of the sovereign or state; servants of fame; and servants of business.—*Bacon*.

(*e*)        For of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
              The saddest are these: 'It might have been.'—*Whittier*.

(*f*)        For example: 'A man who has lost his eye-sight has in one sense less consciousness than he had before.'—*Bain*.

(*g*)        So Bolingbroke exclaims in an invective against the times: 'But all is *little*, and *low*, and *mean* among us.'—*Ibid*.

(*h*)        This is the state of man: To-day he puts forth  
              The tender leaves of hope; to-morrow blossoms,  
              And bears his blushing honors thick upon him:  
              The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,  
              And,—when he thinks, good easy man, full surely  
              His greatness is a ripening,—nips his root,  
              And then he falls, as I do.—*Shakespeare*.

6. A semicolon is put between the larger divisions of a sentence when the minor divisions require to be marked only by commas (*a, b*); sometimes between parts to which a comma would not seem to give due stress (*c, d, e*); between serial clauses or phrases having a common dependence (*f, g*); before an informal enumeration if the par-

ticulars themselves require only a comma (*h*); before *as* preceding an illustrative example (*i*), but note (*j*):

(*a*) I am a fool, I know it; and yet, God help me, I'm poor enough to be a wit.—*Congreve*.

(*b*) What is liberty without wisdom and without virtue? It is the greatest of all possible evils; for it is folly, vice, and madness, without tuition or restraint.—*Burke*.

(*c*) 'Tis not the whole of life to live;  
Nor all of death to die.—*Montgomery*.

(*d*) To adorn ideas with elegance is an act of the mind superior to that of receiving them; but to receive them with a happy discrimination is the effect of a practiced taste.—*D'Israeli*.

(*e*) Man passes away; his name perishes from record and recollection; his history is as a tale that is told, and his very monument becomes a ruin.—*Irving*.

(*f*) One would imagine that books were like women, the worse for being old; that they have a pleasure in being read for the first time; that they open their leaves more cordially; that the spirit of enjoyment wears out with the spirit of novelty; and that, after a certain age, it is high time to put them on the shelf.—*Hazlitt*.

(*g*) If he walks in the fields, he does not know the difference between barley, rye, and wheat; between rape and turnips; between lucerne and sainfoin; between natural and artificial grass.—*London Times*.

(*h*) There are two worlds; the world that we can measure with line and rule; and the world that we feel with our hearts and imaginations.—*Leigh Hunt*.

(*i*) The Verb requires the mention of a subject, and very often an object also; as, 'He comprehends the meaning.'—*Bain*.

(*j*) A Class Noun, as river, tree, city, denotes concrete objects.—*Ibid*.

7. A comma is used to separate grammatically independent elements from the context (*a*); to separate parenthetical or intermediate elements from the context (*b*, *c*, *d*, *e*, *f*); to separate appositional elements from the context (*e*, *f*, *g*); to separate contrasted elements from each other (*h*); to mark the omission of words (*i*, *j*); to set off

transposed elements (*k, l*); to set off direct quotations if short and informal, or if intermediate (*m, n*); after the logical subject if unusually long, if ending in a verb, if composed of a series of terms either unconnected or separated by commas (*o, p*); where the separation is not sufficiently great for the semicolon (*q, r*); wherever it serves to prevent ambiguity (*s, t, u*). No comma, in general, should be put between restrictive elements and that which they restrict (*v, w, x*).

(a) Acquit yourselves like men, my friends.—*Bryant's Iliad*.

(b) Our being is made up of light and darkness, the Light acting on the Darkness, and balancing it.—*Carlyle*.

(c) This earth, that bears thee dead,  
Bears not alive so stout a gentleman.—*Shakespeare*.

(d) Words, at the touch of the poet, blossom into poetry.—*Holmes*.

(e) The brain of this foolish-compounded clay, man, is not able to invent anything that tends to laughter, more than I invent, or is invented on me.—*Shakespeare*.

(f) Time, the great destroyer of other men's happiness, only enlarges the patrimony of literature to its possessor.—*D'Israeli*.

(g) Measures, not men, have always been my mark.—*Goldsmith*.

(h) I have had my foes, but none like thee.—*Byron*.

(i) Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend.—*Bacon*.

(j) Bodily senses imply their objects—the eye, light; the ear, sound; the touch, the taste, the smell, things relative thereto.—*Parker*.

(k) Night after night,  
He sat, and bleared his eyes with books.—*Longfellow*.

(l) In proportion as nations get more corrupt, more disgrace will attach to poverty and more respect to wealth.—*Colton*.

(m) Coleridge cried, 'Great God! how glorious it is to live!' Rénan asks, 'O God! when will it be worth while to live?'—*Ouida*.

(n) In the sentence, 'Dissipation wastes health, as well as time,' the loose addition, as well as time, cannot deprive health of the stress that would naturally be put upon it.—*Bain*.

(o) Every human being whose mind is not debauched, will be willing to give all that he has to get knowledge.—*Johnson*.

(p) As for Baynard, neither his own good sense, nor the dread of indigence, nor the consideration of his children, has been of force sufficient to stimulate him.—*Smollett*.

(q) Love me little, love me long.—*Marlowe*.

(r) A man is first startled by sin; then it becomes pleasing, then easy, then delightful, then frequent, then habitual, then confirmed. Then man is impenitent, then obstinate, and then he is damned.—*Jeremy Taylor*.

(s)       Roses, and pinks, and violets, to adorn  
          The shrine of Flora in her early May.—*Keats*.

(t) I have often spoken to you upon matters kindred to, or at any rate not distantly connected with, my subject for Easter.—*Helps*.

(u) [Consider, also, the effect of omitting final comma in n, p.]

(v) The fur that warms a monarch, warm'd a bear.—*Pope*.

(w) There is a sweet joy which comes to us through sorrow.—*Spurgeon*.

(x)       Exhibit lucid proof  
          That he is honest in the sacred cause.—*Cowper*.

The foregoing rules are general, and should be so regarded. It is important to bear in mind that marks required on principle may be omitted if disagreeable or confusing; that obscurity should, above all things, be avoided; that good usage will often admit of a choice between two modes of indicating relations; that a period indicates the greatest separation, a colon a slighter break, a semicolon a still less one, and a comma the least.

8. The dash is used to indicate a break in the construction of a sentence (*a*); hesitation (*b*); a witty or striking transition (*c*, *d*); after a loose series of nominatives broken off and resumed in a new form (*e*, *f*); to enclose a parenthesis, either as more agreeable or as more emphatic

than curves (*g*); for rhetorical effect (*h, i, j*); between a side-head and the subject-matter (*k*); between a quoted passage and the authority for it. The dash is mainly rhetorical in its functions.

(*a*) All study is not reading, any more than all reading is study. By study I mean — but let one of the noblest geniuses and hardest students of any age define it for me.—*Everett*.

(*b*) I take — eh ! oh ! as much exercise — eh ! — as I can, Madam Gout.—*Franklin*.

(*c*) Oh ! nature's noblest gift — my gray — goose quill!—*Byron*.

(*d*) Julius Cæsar had his Brutus; Charles the First had his Cromwell; and George the Third — may profit by their example.—*Patrick Henry*.

(*e*) A sunny, cheerful view of life, resting on truth and fact, co-existing with practical aspiration ever to make things, men and self better than they are — this is the true, healthful poetry of existence.—*Robertson*.

(*f*) To honor God, to benefit mankind,  
To serve with lofty gifts the lowly needs  
Of the poor race for which the God-man died,  
And do it all for love — oh this is great.—*Holland*.

(*g*) A young Levite — such was the phrase then in use — might be had for his board, a small garret, and ten pounds a year.—*Macaulay*.

(*h*) I did not fall into love — I rose into love.—*Bulwer*.

(*i*) The rolling mist came down and hid the land —  
And never home came she.—*Kingsley*.

(*j*) Men will wrangle for religion; write for it; fight for it; die for it; anything but — live for it.—*Colton*.

(*k*) [See Rule 2, *c*.]

9. Curves are used to enclose independent elements which violently break the unity of the context (*a, b*); dependent elements if desired to be read in a perceptible undertone,—a method of imparting emphasis (*c, d, e*). Matter within the curves will be punctuated as in any other position. Whatever point would be inserted be-

tween parts if the parenthesis were omitted, must be retained after the second curve.

- (a) Wisdom must be sought;  
Sought before all; but (how unlike all else,  
We seek on earth!) 'tis never sought in vain.—*Young*.

(b) A share of evil, greater or less (the difference of shares is not worth mentioning), is the unalterable doom of mortals.—*Carlyle*.

(c) It is a book (not to say it immodestly) intended to lie in old parlor windows, in studies, in cottages, in cabins, aboard ship.—*Hunt*.

(d) All knowledge, and wonder (which is the seed of knowledge), is an impression of pleasure in itself.—*Bacon*.

- (e) Know then this truth (enough for man to know),  
'Virtue alone is-Happiness below.'—*Pope*.

10. Brackets are used when words not the author's are inserted to explain the meaning or to supply an omission:

She [the Muse] doth tell me where to borrow  
Comfort in the midst of sorrow.—*Whittier*.

11. Single quotation-points are used to enclose the identical language of another (a). A quotation within a quotation is distinguished by double points (b). The quoted passage retains its own punctuation (c). Titles of books and periodicals may be quoted, italicized, or merely in Roman and capitalized (d, e, f). If the passage quoted is paragraphed, and is either preceded by a distinct reference or accompanied by the authority, the quotation-points (at least in print) are unnecessary, because they add nothing to clearness (g).

(a) 'There is nothing holier in this life of ours, than the first consciousness of love,—the first fluttering of its silken wings,' says Longfellow.

- (b) "“Shoot, if you must this old gray head,  
But spare your country's flag,” she said.”

- (c) A still small voice spake unto me,  
'Thou art so full of misery  
Were it not better not to be?'—*Tennyson*.

(d) The world I had found out in Cooke's edition of the 'British Novelists' was to me a dance through life, a perpetual gala-day.—*Hazlitt*.

(e) A devotional exercise proper to be said before reading the Faerie Queene.—*Lamb*.

(f) The edition of the *Medical Times* . . . says that he fell asleep reading it.—*Scotsman*.

(g) Poverty is the only load which is the heavier the more loved ones there are to assist in supporting it.—*Richter*.

[See also the illustrations in this work generally.]

### EXERCISES.

1. What different points are employed to set off words, phrases, and clauses, in apposition? Compose or find illustrations.

2. By what different marks are parenthetical or intermediate expressions separated from the context? Illustrate.

3. Write three compound sentences, of which the first shall require a comma between its members, the second a semicolon, and the third a colon.

4. Explain the capitalization and punctuation of the following, criticising and amending, where improvable, the diction and the style:

(1) The lilies say: Behold how we  
Preach, without words, of purity.—*Rossetti*.

(2) In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue?—*Sidney Smith*.

(3) The circumstance which gives authors an advantage above all these great masters, is this, that they can multiply their originals; or rather can make copies of their works to what number they please, which shall be as valuable as the originals themselves.—*Addison*.

(4) It is only hatred, not love, that requires explanation. The source of the best and holiest, from the universe up to God, is hidden behind a night, full of too-distant stars.—*Richter*.

(5) The conscious utterance of thought by speech or action, to any end, is art.—*Emerson*.

(6) It is a principle of war, that when you can use the thunder-bolt you must prefer it to the cannon. Earnestness is the thunder-bolt.—*Napoleon*.



(7) Not only strike while the iron is hot, but make it hot by striking.—*Cromwell*.

(8) The greatest of faults, I should say, is to be conscious of none.—*Carlyle*.

(9) Alas! how easily things go wrong!  
A sigh too deep, or a kiss too long,  
And then comes a mist and a weeping rain,  
And life is never the same again.—*McDonald*.

(10) Drawing near her death, she sent most pious thoughts as harbingers to heaven; and her soul saw a glimpse of happiness through the chinks of her sickness-broken body.—*Fuller*.

(11) In modern times, when more events are crowded into a decade than formerly occurred in a century.—*E. C. Stedman*.

(12) It is true the object of laughter is always inferior to us; but then the converse is not true—that every one who is inferior to us is an object of laughter.—*Sidney Smith*.

(13) 'Beautiful as sweet!  
And young as beautiful! and soft as young!  
And gay as soft! and innocent as gay!'—*Young*.

(14) 'If thou be'st he—but O, how fallen, how changed  
From him who in the happy realms of light,  
Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine  
Myriads, though bright!'—*Milton*.

(15) I can feel very little ambition to follow you through your ordinary routine of pettifogging objections and barefaced assertions, the only difficulty of making which is to throw aside all regard to truth and decency, and the only difficulty in answering them is to overcome one's contempt for the writer.—*Hazlitt*.

(16) Amazed at the alteration in his manner, every sentence that he uttered increased her embarrassment.—*Miss Austen*.

(17) Allowing for the exaggeration of friendship and poetry, this is not a bad description of what Lord John Russell's style became at its best.—*Justin McCarthy*.

(18) Politics, as he makes even Demosthenes admit, are the 'sad refuge of restless minds, averse from business and from study.'—*Leslie Stephen*.

(19) Then, with ingenuous vanity, and forgetting grammar in

gush, he [C. Dickens] protests, 'Nobody will miss her like I shall.'  
—*John Foster*.

(20) There is such malice, treachery, and dissimulation, even among professed friends and intimate companions, as can not fail to strike a virtuous mind with horror.—*Smollett*.

(31) De — had a painful complaint, which, sometimes keeping him awake, made him sleep, perhaps, when it did come, the deeper.  
—*De Quincey*.

(22) Friendship is excellent, and friendship may be called love; but it is not love. It may be more enduring and placidly satisfying in the end; it may be better and wiser and more prudent for acquaintance to beget esteem, and esteem regard, and regard affection, and affection an interchange of peaceful vows; the result, a well-ordered life and home. All this is admirable, no doubt; an owl is a bird when you can get no other; but the love born of a moment, yet born of eternity, which comes but once in a lifetime, and to one in a thousand lives, unquestioning, unthinking, investigating nothing, proving nothing, sufficient unto itself — ah, that is divine.—*Anna Dickinson*.

(23) Of the two, the simple structure is the more conducive to perspicuity, for where the sentences are long great care is needed that the clauses be kept in their proper order and relation; that the leading subject be retained prominently before the mind; and that too many things be not crowded together.—*De Mille*.

##### 5. Capitalize and punctuate:

(1) in this gods world with its wild whirling eddies and madfoam oceans where men and nations perish as if without law and judgment for an unjust thing sternly delayed dost thou think that there is therefore no justice it is what the fool has said in his heart it is what the wise in all times were wise because they desired and knew for ever not to be i tell thee again there is nothing else but justice one strong thing i find here below the just thing the true thing my friend if thou hadst all the artillery of woolwich marching at thy back in support of an unjust thing and infinite bonfires visibly awaiting ahead of thee to blaze centuries to come for thy victory on behalf of it i would advise thee to call halt.—*carlyle*

(2) and all the while our lines were moving on they had burned through the woods and swept over the rough and rolling ground like a prairie fire never halting never faltering they charged up to

the first rifle-pits with a cheer if the thunder of the guns had been terrible it was now growing sublime it was like the footfall of god on the ledges of cloud our forts and batteries still thrust out their mighty arms across the valley the guns that lined the arc of the crest full in our front opened like the fan of lucifer and converged their fire it was rifles and musketry it was grape and canister it was shell and shrapnel mission ridge was volcanic a thousand torrents of red poured over its brink and rushed together to its base and still the sublime diapason rolled on echoes that had never waked before roared out from height to height and called from the far ranges of waldrons ridge to lookout mountain—*benj f taylor camp and field*

- (3) cleon true possesseth acres but the landscape i  
 half the charms to me it yieldeth money cannot buy  
 cleon harbors sloth and dulness freshening vigor i  
 he in velvet i in fustian richer man am i  
 cleon is a slave to grandeur free as thought am i  
 cleon fees a score of doctors need of none have i  
 wealth-surrounded care-environed cleon fears to die  
 death may come he'll find me ready happier man am i  
—charles mackay

- (4) thou little tricky puck  
 with antic toys so funnily bestuck  
 light as the singing bird that wings the air  
 the door the door he'll tumble down the stair  
 thou darling of thy sire  
 why jane he'll set his pinafore afire  
 thou imp of mirth and joy  
 in loves dear chain so strong so bright a link  
 thou idol of thy parents drat the boy  
 there goes my ink—*hood*

## CHAPTER VIII.

### METHODS OF EXPRESSION—STYLE.

The style is of the man.—*BUFFON.*

Style is the gossamer on which the seeds of truth float through the world.—*BANCROFT.*

WE speak of style in architecture, in painting, in music, or in any of the fine arts, meaning thereby the mode of presentation; of style in manners, meaning the characteristic way of conducting one's self; of style in dress, meaning the prevalent fashion, or that peculiar to an individual. So style in discourse is the special manner in which thought is expressed. Note the points of difference and resemblance in the following. Observe the Anglo-Saxon simplicity of some, and the classical stateliness of others. One shows a decided preference for short sentences, another for long. Here the movement is calm and regular; there, disjointed, jerky, volcanic:

A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance in riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into the fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.—*Bible.*

Were I ambitious of any other patron than the public, I would inscribe this work to a statesman who, in a long, a stormy, and at

length an unfortunate administration, had many political opponents almost without a personal enemy; who has retained on his fall from power many faithful and disinterested friends, and who under the pressure of severe infirmity enjoys the lively vigor of his mind and the felicity of his incomparable temper.—*Gibbon*.

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Out upon your guarded lips. Sew them up with pack-thread — do. Else, if you would be a man, speak what you think to-day in words as hard as cannon-balls, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks, in words as hard again — though it contradict everything you said to-day. 'Ah, then,' exclaimed the aged ladies, 'you shall be sure to be misunderstood.' Misunderstood! It is a right fool's word.—*Emerson*.

To omit mere prurient susceptivities that rest on vacuum, look at poor Byron, who really had much substance in him. Sitting there in his self-exile, with a proud heart striving to persuade itself that it despises the entire created universe; and far off, in foggy Babylon, let any pitifullest whipster draw pen on him, your proud Byron writhes in torture, as if the pitiful whipster were a magician, or his pen a galvanic wire struck into Byron's spinal marrow! Lamentable, despicable, one had rather be a kitten and cry mew! Oh, son of Adam, great or little, according as thou art lovable, those thou livest with will love thee!—*Carlyle*.

'Style' is from the Latin *stylus*, a steel instrument used by the Romans for writing on waxen tablets. By an easy metaphor it came to denote the method of composition, as 'pen' is now frequently a symbol for author or literature.

**Subjective Aspect.**—As the attire, the behavior, the air, indicate the disposition and habits of the person — whether cleanly or slovenly, tasteful or tawdry, sensible or foolish, refined or boorish — so a writer's style is, in no unimportant sense, the material expression of his soul-life; for his words are but the outward signs, the visible copies, of his ideas. His choice of terms, his way of putting them together, make (to speak conventionally) the garment of his

thought, showing by the fall of the folds (when once you have learned to read) what he likes, what he can do,—his clumsiness, his cleverness, his imagination, his delights. If the words carry too much ornament, you may know that he is greedy of pleasure; if too little, that he is hard, dry, insensitive, and the like; if too great bulk, that he is affected; if full of commonplaces set forth with solemnity or flourish, that he is silly; if volubly uttered, with volume of sound, reaching us as sounds and nothing more, that he is unreal and hollow; if murky or obscure, that he has a confused habit of mind, vagueness and indirectness of purpose. At root, the virtues of style are moral. Hence the saying of Milton, that he who would write good poetry must make his life a poem. It is partly, no doubt, because style is the unconscious revelation of the hidden self, that men are influenced by language as much as by ideas.

**Objective Aspect.**—Though style receives its peculiar form chiefly from the mental movements of which it is the expression, it is greatly modified by external conditions—as fulness and force of vocabulary; the choice, number, and arrangement of words; frequency of practice in composition; completeness of preparation, and carefulness of finish; the nature of the subjects treated, the end sought, and the power of persons addressed. The inner and the outer, the original and the acquired, blend and reveal themselves in the result.

**Diversities.**—Style, then, varies with many considerations, but preëminently with character. In literature as in painting, Orientals are more fanciful or picturesque than Europeans; savages than civilized men. The Italians are warm and passionate; the French, rapid and sparkling; the Germans, clumsy and unwieldy—Lessing, Richter, and a few others, excepted.

Again, the manner of one age differs from that of another. No Englishman now writes in the style of King Alfred or of Bacon. The literary garniture of the Elizabethans, like that of their bodies, was stiff and elaborate—in keeping with their peaked beards, starched collars, trunk hose, and quilted doublets. In Pope's day—the day of powdered queues, cocked hats, and lace ruffles—style was highly artificial, even finical, like the manners and fashions of society. To-day the stately periods of Johnson would not be tolerated.

The individual writers of any age, indeed, bear to each other a general resemblance in the method of expressing their thoughts, as they do in their dispositions and tastes; yet, as with the leaves of the forest, there are never two indistinguishably alike. The more original and creative the writer, the more distinctive his style. Where is he that could wear successfully the livery of Carlyle? Men will have similar or dissimilar styles, according as they have similar or dissimilar natures and environments.

Obviously there are many possible divisions of style, to be expressed by a great variety of adjectives, according to the quality which serves as a principle of division. Thus with respect to the number of words, it may be called concise, sententious, laconic, terse, copious, diffuse, verbose, etc.; with respect to arrangement, natural, inverted, loose, periodic, smooth or flowing, easy or graceful, etc. A composition abounding in any one of the figures would be described by a derivative from that figure; as metaphorical, antithetical, epigrammatic, ironical, elliptical, etc. The use of ornament in general would be designated, according to the amount of imagery present, by such epithets as elegant, flowery, ornate, imaginative. A style characterized by misplaced and overwrought finery is said to be florid; if marked by commonplaces floridly expressed, with more or less of mock or

real enthusiasm, it is said to be stilted or sentimental; if very extravagant and enthusiastic, ranting; if studiously clothing plain and simple matter in long, ponderous words, pretentious; if gaudily and deceitfully ornamental, meretricious; if high-sounding—big, with little or no meaning—pompous, grandiloquent, sophomoric, bombastic. If the writer is constantly thrusting forward his own personality, he is egotistic. If he abounds in common forms of expression—if he is familiar, yet rises in some degree above the conversational, he is idiomatic and simple. His diction is seemingly artless. He writes so easily that the reader imagines he can write as well himself. If his words are swelling, if his sentences are long and involved, if his tone is constrained, he is labored. Either if he alludes frequently to the literature or history of Greece and Rome, or if he writes in accordance with the best standards, he is classical. If he conveys by hint or implication much that is not actually expressed, he is suggestive. If he possesses much human interest, warmth of heart, he is sympathetic or humane. Possessing humanity in a high degree, he will usually be popular. If he exhibits a ready flow of words and great ease of composition, he is fluent. If rich in thought as well as copious in diction, he is affluent. If he has vivacity, accompanied by novelty and wit, he is racy. If his imagery is refined, his suggestions delicate, and his expressions tenderly graceful, he is spirituelle. A style which has some ornament and considerable polish, is neat; if destitute of figures, wit, humor, and blood, it is dry—tolerable in didactic writing only; if clear and simple, not harsh, yet without mere embellishment, it is plain.

Many of the features denoted by the above and other adjectives will not seldom be found to coexist in the same author, while one or more may be especially prominent. Thus Milton is massive, dignified, classical, imaginative,



etc.; Locke and Swift are plain, idiomatic, etc.; Macaulay is brilliant, etc.; Thackeray is vivacious, open, etc.; Addison is flowing, elegant, etc.; Goldsmith and Irving are graceful, humane, etc.; Carlyle is rugged, vehement, etc.; Ruskin is stately, affluent, etc.; Shelley and Keats are spirituelle, suggestive, etc.; Emerson is concise, energetic, terse, etc.; Tennyson, correct, polished, ornate; Hawthorne, pure, delicate, flowing, placid; Shakespeare, versatile, forest-like. The perfect writer's style will be, not a pipe, but an organ, with many banks of keys.

**Primary Qualities.**—No absolute standard is to be set up. The style demanded in any composition depends upon the man, the theme, and the end. That will be good, relatively to the individual, in which his peculiarities have full and free play. That will be good generally in which proper words are put in proper places, and are vitalized by the thought. All good styles, whatever their minor differences, should possess certain leading properties. If a writer would be easily understood, he must be clear. If he would secure the highest adaptation of form to the object proposed, he must please: and if he would please, as well as inform, he must be refined or choice. If he would impress himself upon others, he must be vigorous. Thus the great excellences of method — the characteristics in which reputable methods ought to agree, are perspicuity, elegance, and energy. Of these three, the first is the most essential. Without this, which is as light to the eye, the effect of the others is lost. The second, which assumes various positions in the different kinds of prose, ranging from the lowest degree to the highest, from the mere lustre of clearness to the beauty and grace of life, is, in some of its elements, a supplementary cause of force, and is always necessary to give pleasure to taste. It becomes the more imperative as culture increases. The third, in its several aspects of thoroughness, rapidity, and

directness, or of strength, vivacity, and vigor, stands intimately connected with the will, and is only secondary to the first, whether the purpose be to instruct, to convince, or to persuade. If the presentation be feeble, dull, and heavy, the thought cannot excite the mental powers of the reader or hearer.

**Fundamental Principles.**—Underlying all these varieties and all rhetorical maxims, are two laws, forever to be regarded by whoever wishes to write or to speak words that will be felt — the economy and the stimulation of attention. The former may be thus stated and explained:

Regarding language as an apparatus of symbols for the conveyance of thought, we may say that, as in a mechanical apparatus, the more simple and the better arranged its parts, the greater will be the effect produced. In either case, whatever force is absorbed by the machine is deducted from the result. A reader or listener has at each moment but a limited amount of mental power available. To recognize and interpret the symbols presented to him, requires part of this power; to arrange and combine the images suggested requires a further part; and only that part which remains can be used for realizing the thought conveyed. Hence, the more time and attention it takes to receive and understand each sentence, the less time and attention can be given to the contained idea; and the less vividly will that idea be conceived.

To prevent unnecessary waste is, then, an important secret of effect. Another mode of reaching the same result is to stimulate mental action by appeals to the imagination, by variations of method, and by intensity of feeling. To charm the fancy by a figure, or to please the sense of melody by a cadence, is, often, to deepen the impression of the sentiment. The declarative form is quite as economical as the interrogative; but a hearer who

is listless while assertions only are made, will be upon the alert when he is appealed to by a question. Words which come from no deeper source than the lips, lack a most potent element of effectiveness. 'Logic set on fire' is one of the recorded definitions of eloquence. 'Heat is life. and cold is death,' says the scientist. Unction marks furrows in hearts. Unbroken uniformity, again, becomes offensive. If a flower be held to the nose too long, we become insensible to its odor. Few read the authors that always seem to sound the self-same note.

**Importance.**—If style is the rendering more or less justly the inward life, if that thought which is your concern can reach the mind completely and with all its advantages only when it is well expressed, it ought not to be necessary to insist that style is a great matter. How many are there who know how to think that do not know how to write? 'To write well,' says Buffon, 'is at once to think well, to feel well, and to render well.' To neglect form is thus to neglect, in some sort, the life and the faculty of communication.

Style is the artistic part of literature, hardly less valuable than the substance, if the product is to be permanent. It is the principal feature in which the writer can be original. Out of the same stones may be reared a Parthenon or a tavern. Shakespeare's power lay not in finding out new material, but in imparting new life to whatever he discovered; Carlyle's, not in the novelty of what he has said, but in the *way* in which he has said it. In Shelley's verse, in Hawthorne's periods, in Ruskin's grand harmonies, who is not sensible of influences quite distinct from the matter? The same thought, expressed by one author, will make us yawn, by another will startle us. An inferior work may obtain passport to futurity through witchery of form, while a work of merit may fail of success through lack of formal excellence. Said

Napoleon: 'What is called style, good or bad, does not affect me. I care only for the force of the thought.' As well might he have said that he cared nothing for the arrangement of his soldiers in battle — only for the energy with which they would fight. 'The fighting power of soldiers,' says Dr. Mathews, 'depends upon the tactical skill with which they are handled; and the force of ideas depends upon the way in which the verbal battalions that represent them are marshalled on the battle-fields of thought.'

**Cultivation.**—Style, since it partakes of the characteristics of the individual, is, like any other quality, improvable. *Think and read closely*, with the steady direction of the mind to one thing. Clear, concise, and vigorous expression must spring from a well-furnished mind, having a full grasp, a distinct view of the subject, the end, and the means. Whoever is master of his thought, is master of the word fitted to express it; while he who only half possesses it, seeks in vain to torture out of language the secret of that inspiration which should be in himself. It was the boast of Dante that no word had ever forced him to say what *he* would not, though he had forced many a word to say what *it* would not. Nor can the most brilliant intellect do without an accumulated fund of facts and ideas. Before Johnson began the *Rambler*, he had filled a commonplace-book with materials. Addison amassed three folios of thought and illustrations before he began the *Spectator*; and after the *Guardian* was finished he replied to the suggestion of a friend, 'I must now take some time *pour me délasser*, and *lay in fuel* for a future work.

*Compose frequently and deliberately.* Excellences of mind are less the gift of nature than the rewards of industry. It is only by the discipline of energetic action that the veteran accomplishes with ease what seemed

impossible to the raw recruit. It was after years of labor that Raphael was able to throw his conception upon canvas, perfect and complete, without the necessity of realizing it by piecemeal in intermediate attempts. It was because Gibbon had long written studiously, that he could send the last three volumes of the *Decline and Fall* to the press in the first draught. 'The style of an author,' he says, 'should be an image of his mind, but the choice and command of language is the fruit of exercise.' Says Quintilian: 'I enjoin that such as are beginning the practice of composition write slowly and with anxious deliberation. Their great object, at first, should be to write as well as possible; practice will enable them to write quickly. By degrees, matter will offer itself still more readily; words will be at hand; composition will flow; everything, as in the arrangement of a well-ordered family, will present itself in its proper place. The sum of the whole is this: by hasty composition we shall never acquire the art of composing well; by writing well, we shall soon be able to write speedily.'

*Revise carefully.* The best writers and the ablest speakers have devoted great labor to the correction and refinement of details. Swift tested the intelligibility of his sentences by reading them to the unlearned. Burke's manuscript was covered with interlineations and alterations. When a lady asked Johnson, after an elaborate revision of his early papers in the *Rambler*, whether he could now improve any of them, he replied: 'Yes, madam, I could make even the best of them better still.' Sterne spent six months in perfecting a diminutive volume. Buffon made eleven draughts of his *Nature* before he sent it to the press. Cervantes took twelve years to write the second part of *Don Quixote*. Gibbon gave most critical study to the formation of his style. 'Many experiments,' he says, 'were made before I could hit the middle tone between a

dull chronicle and a rhetorical declamation: three times did I compose the first chapter, and twice the second and third, before I was tolerably satisfied with their effect.' Prescott, at the age of twenty-five, resumed the study of rhetoric with assiduous perseverance. Having written several chapters of *Ferdinand and Isabella*, he said: 'Two or three faults of style occur to me in looking over some former compositions. Too many adjectives; too many couplets of substantives as well as adjectives, and perhaps of verbs; too set; sentences too much in the same mould; too formal periphrasis instead of familiar; sentences balanced by *ands*, *buts*, and semicolons; too many precise, emphatic pronouns, as *these*, *those*, *which*, etc., instead of the particles *the*, *a*, etc.' Says the terse and vigorous Webster: 'My style was not formed without great care, and earnest study of the best authors. I have labored hard upon it, for I early felt the importance of expression to thought. I have re-written sentence after sentence, and pondered long upon each alteration.' 'It shall not less but more strenuously be inculcated,' says Carlyle, 'that, in the way of writing, no great thing was ever, or ever will be, done with ease, but with difficulty.' Plato wrote the beginning of his *Republic* many times in a great variety of ways, finally reaching a style so perfect that it seems artless. The ancients thought it worthy to be called divine.

*Read thoroughly the standard English and American authors.* As the young painter or sculptor, not content with text-books and lectures, spends months or years in the galleries of Florence and Rome, in order to learn how the great masters of form and color wrought their miracles of art, so the student of style should devote himself to the masterpieces of literature, in order to enrich his vocabulary, to acquire in some degree the secret of their power, to detect his own deficiencies, to elevate and

refine his taste. 'Evil communications corrupt good manners.' One's words, like his manners, depend largely on the company kept, and are learned largely by unconscious imitation. Choose the best, whether of newspapers or of books. 'To write well,' says Dryden, 'one must have frequent habitudes with the best company.' Quintilian advised his pupils, also, to practice what is called paraphrase with reference to prose, and metaphrase with reference to poetry. They consist alike in translating passages from good authors into other words in the same tongue. Franklin added the converse of paraphrase. He laid aside his version of Addison, for example, until he had forgotten the phraseology of the original, and then turned it back, with as close conformity to Addison's style as he was able to command. Even better, perhaps, is the practice of translating from one language into another. The learner is thus guarded against becoming a servile copyist. He paints a similar picture, but with different pigments.

Bear in mind the principles and maxims set forth and illustrated in preceding chapters, with special reference to the choice, number, and arrangement of words.

Remember, also, that splendid phrases and swelling sentences can form no substitute for knowledge and reflection. Dr. Whately's advice is excellent: 'Let an author study the best models — mark their beauties of style, and dwell upon them, that he may insensibly catch the habit of expressing himself with Elegance; and when he has completed any composition, he may revise it, and cautiously alter any passage that is awkward and harsh, as well as those that are feeble and obscure: but let him never, while writing, think of any beauties of style; but content himself with such as may occur spontaneously. He should carefully study Perspicuity as he goes along; he may also, though more cautiously, aim in like manner

at Energy; but if he is endeavoring after Elegance, he will hardly fail to betray that endeavor; and in proportion as he does this, he will be so far from giving pleasure, to good judges, that he will offend more than by the rudest simplicity.' If you would be accurate, be true; if clear, write with sympathy and a desire to be intelligible; if powerful, be earnest; if pleasant, cultivate a sense of rhythm and order. 'Struggle unweariedly,' says Carlyle, 'to acquire what is possible for every God-created man, a free, open, humble soul: speak not at all, in any wise, till you have somewhat to speak.'

'Altogether,' says Goethe, 'the style of a writer is a faithful representative of his mind; therefore, if any man wish to write a clear style, let him first be clear in his thoughts; and if he would write in a noble style, let him first possess a noble soul.'



## CHAPTER IX.

### SUBSTANCE OF EXPRESSION—INVENTION.

Examine well, ye writers, weigh with care  
What suits your genius, what your strength will bear.—HORACE.

Never read till you have thought yourself empty; never write till you have read yourself full.—RICHTER.

Invention, though it can be cultivated, cannot be reduced to rule; there is no science which will enable a man to bethink himself of that which will suit his purpose. But when he *has* thought of something, science will tell him whether that which he has thought of will suit his purpose or not.—J. S. MILL.

THE word *invention* is derived from the Latin *invenire*, to come in, to enter. By the natural progress of language from the literal to the metaphorical, it came in process of time to signify discovery. Rhetorically, it consists in the faculty of finding whatsoever is proper to be said, and of devising suitable forms for the purpose of discourse. Absolutely, it is the whole talent, presenting itself at every point in the art. The invention of the ideas, or of the matter, however, is invention in the highest sense of the term.

**Choice of Subject.**—The subject may be furnished, and invention will then be taxed only in treating it; as in courts of law, in legislative debates, in prize essays, in many academical exercises: or it may be left to your choice; as in pulpit eloquence, in occasional addresses, and in most kinds of composition. If the latter, let it be level to the capacity of your audience. Let it be chosen with reference to the occasion and your design, whether to instruct, to convince, to persuade, to please, or all of these. Find one that is appropriate to your age and

attainments, one to which you have felt or will feel attracted. The attempt to discuss a subject not fairly within your power must issue in vagary, frigidity, and failure. A wise distrust is better than an overweening confidence or a false pride. To do anything excellently, you should do it from conviction. Unless you are yourself interested, you cannot expect to interest others. The words that are 'half battles' are never spoken but in sincerity. Nothing is more easily detected, or more repellent, than a lukewarm earnestness or a counterfeit enthusiasm. Remember, too, that the humblest subject may be lifted into the region of literature. Cowper produced a great poem on 'The Sofa,' and called it *The Task*. A stolen lock of hair inspired Pope's brilliant mock-heroic poem, *The Rape of the Lock*. A London linen-draper, Izaak Walton, won an honorable place among British authors by a treatise on Angling, written, perhaps, to teach the angler's lowly craft, yet in such sweet and serious diction, with such infusion of rational loyalty to things human and Divine, of simple, child-like love for the beauties of earth and sky, that his little book on fishing has outlived many a more ambitious work.

**Determination of Subject.**—Having chosen your subject, contemplate it from a particular point of view, and neglect all that is irrelevant. If you decide, for example, to limit your attention to the religious aspects of *Wealth*, ignore its economical and its social aspects. If you are to write on *Youth*, restrict yourself to one of the many possible conceptions of it,—Hopefulness of Youth, or Youth is the Time for Education, or Pleasures of Youth, or How should Youth be Spent? The general subject (or title) adopted by an essayist might be *Dreams*, but with this, in any single article, essay, chapter, or section, he would combine some limitary notion; as, *Dreams and Realities*; *Dreams and Sleep*; *Dreams and their*

Causes; Crimes in Dreams; Extraordinary Dreams; Laws of Dreams; Literature of Dreams; Strangely Fulfilled Dreams; Warnings in Dreams, etc.

So much of the subject as you intend to develop, is, whether implied or formally stated, technically known as the *status*. It is sometimes distinguished as the *thesis*, or *theme*. Other names are commonly applied, as *position*, *standpoint*, *central thought*, *proposition*. Thus the ground, main idea, point of view, central thought, or status of Burke's speech on *Conciliation with America* is, that the people of the American colonies should be admitted into an interest in the constitution, and be allowed the rights of Englishmen. The status of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, as of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, is the trials of the soul in its stages from conversion to glory, or from the probation of earth to the rewards of heaven; of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, denunciation of shams; of Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*, the eternal and illimitable consequences of human action.

The status is evidently at the threshold of all good writing, and is the *germ* of the entire discourse. If properly conceived and expressed, it should be the fruit of prolonged reflection. It should have unity; should be clear; should be comprehensive rather than extensive. Not otherwise is it possible for any work, literary or artistic, to be well done.

A great deal of the discomfort and difficulty of writing compositions arises from the want of a well-defined subject, or *nucleus* of thought. When the young confess that they do not know what to write about, it will often be found that they have been dissipating their energies in the endeavor to cover too wide a range. In all probability, they have formed no status. *Honesty* or *The Ideal* is not a status, but a term. To treat of either, the writer should begin by asking what he believes to be true of it—

that is, by framing some proposition respecting it: as, Honesty is the best policy; Love of the ideal [is] an evidence of the soul's immortality; The instinct which prompts man to form and pursue an ideal of character or condition is the mainspring of human progress; or, The effort to realize something better and higher than the present actual is the law of the world.

The importance of a status kept steadily in view is well illustrated by Dr. J. H. Newman, who supposes a young Mr. Brown to have written a composition which has been sent by his admiring father to a tutor (Mr. Black) at the University:

FORTES FORTUNA ADJUVAT.<sup>1</sup>

Of all the uncertain and capricious powers which rule our earthly destiny, Fortune is the chief. Who has not heard of the poor being raised up, and the rich being laid low? Alexander the Great said he envied Diogenes in his tub, because Diogenes could have nothing less. We need not go far for an instance of fortune. Who was so great as Nicholas, the Czar of all the Russians, a year ago, and now he is 'fallen, fallen from his high estate, without a friend to grace his obsequies.' The Turks are the finest specimen of the human race, yet they too have experienced the vicissitudes of fortune. Horace says that we should wrap ourselves in our virtue when fortune changes. Napoleon, too, shows us how little we can rely on fortune; but his faults, great as they were, are being redeemed by his nephew, Louis Napoleon, who has shown himself very different from what we expected, though he has never explained how he came to swear to the Constitution, and then mounted the imperial throne.

From all this it appears that we should rely on fortune only while it remains,—recollecting the words of the thesis, 'Fortes fortuna adjuvat'; and that, above all, we should ever cultivate those virtues which will never fail us, and which are a sure basis of respectability, and will profit us here and hereafter.

'Not one word of this,' says Mr. Black, to whom the boy's father has submitted the composition for criticism, 'is upon the thesis. . . . "Fortes fortuna adjuvat" is a *proposition*; it states a certain gene-

<sup>1</sup> Fortune assists the brave.

ral principle; and this is just what an ordinary boy would be sure to miss, and Robert does miss it. He goes off at once on the word "fortuna." "Fortuna" was not his subject; the thesis was intended to guide him, for his own good; he refuses to be put into leading strings; he breaks loose, and runs off in his own fashion on the broad field and in wild chase of "fortune" instead of closing with the subject, which, as being definite, would have supported him.

'It would have been very cruel to have told a boy to write on "fortune"; it would have been like asking him his opinion of "things in general." Fortune is "good," "bad," "capricious," "unexpected," ten thousand things all at once—you see them all in the Gradus, and one of them as much as the other. Ten thousand things may be said of it; give me *one* of them, and I will write upon it; I cannot write on more than one; Robert prefers to write upon all. . .

'Now, I will prophesy one thing of Robert, unless this fault is knocked out of him,' continued merciless Mr. Black: 'When he grows up, and has to make a speech, or write a letter for the papers, he will look out for flowers, full-blown flowers, figures, smart expressions, trite quotations, hackneyed beginnings and endings, pompous circumlocutions, and so on; but the meaning, the sense, the solid sense, the foundation, you may hunt the slipper long enough before you catch it.'

**Accumulation of Material.**—After the choice and determination of your subject, the next step is to take account of what you know or think, to recall and evolve, by patient reflection, all that can be made useful in exhibiting and enforcing your views. Thought must be continuous and concentrated, directed to a definite object, not allowed to wander from one thing to another. It is possible to *look* your subject into shape. As troops, to achieve a glorious victory, must be marshaled upon the same plain, obey the same commander, fight the same foe; so the faculties, to effect anything important, must act in concert, sieze their purpose with vigor, and pursue it with perseverance. The poet's soul, like the maniac's eye, may roll in fine frenzy; but to the student, steadiness of gaze is indispensable. Only this can revive the

facts and principles which lie dormant in the memory, unfold the full import of much that is there, bring together the scattered fragments, discover new relations, and afford a general idea of the line of development. As well might genius say, 'Go to, I will make a religion,' as, 'Go to, I will make a great essay.' The proposed result cannot be reached by pressure or cramming, or by the most heroic extempore endeavor. The rays of the intellect must be converged to a focus, and be held there. 'The subject,' says Dr. Mathews, 'must be brooded over from day to day, till, by the half-conscious, half-unconscious processes of thought, all that is unessential, incongruous, or foreign, has been sloughed off; till all difficulties, surveyed again and again from new angles of vision, have been resolved, and that which was at first but a faint suggestion of truth, has surrounded itself, by a kind of elective affinity of ideas, with appropriate imagery and illustration, and stands out, at last, in bold relief and in full proportion before the mental eye.'

This previous meditation will prepare you to read with advantage what others have written. You will be less liable to be diverted to foreign matters, and will detect more quickly whatever is related to your subject. Be not biased by the authority of a name. Weigh and consider. Let your reading be varied. New views will thus be obtained, and your knowledge will be comprehensive. Let your authors be not only in unison with your opinions, but also adverse to them. You will thus be constrained to self-activity, feeling yourself strengthened by coincidence, and incited to a more careful examination by difference. Says Sir William Hamilton, 'To read passively, to learn—is, in reality, not to learn at all. In study, implicit faith, belief upon authority, is worse even than, for a time, erroneous speculation.' 'I call that the best theme,' says Dr. Arnold, 'which shows that the boy

has read and thought for himself; that the next best which shows that he has read several books, and digested what he has read; and that the worst which shows that he has followed but one book, and that without reflection.' Gibbon's practice furnishes a good general rule: 'After a rapid glance on the subject and distribution of a new book, I suspend the reading of it, which I only resume after having examined the subject in all its relations; after having called up in my solitary walks all that I have read, or thought or learned in regard to the subject of the whole book or of some chapter in particular. I thus place myself in a condition to add to my general stock of knowledge, and I am thus sometimes favorably disposed by the accordance, sometimes armed by the opposition, of our views.' His precepts, as well as his example, are valuable hints: 'Let us read with method, and propose to ourselves an end to which all our studies may point. Detached parcels of knowledge cannot form a whole. . . . While we propose an end in our reading, let not this end be too remote; and when once we have attained it, let our attention be directed to a different subject. Inconstancy weakens the understanding; a long and exclusive application to a single object hardens and contracts it. . . . To read with attention, exactly to define the expression of our author, never to admit a conclusion without comprehending its reason, often to pause, reflect, and interrogate ourselves; these are so many advices which it is easy to give, but difficult to follow.' It may be added that, to render impressions specific and distinct, the thoughts gathered or suggested should be either carefully fixed in memory or noted on paper, grouped around the central idea in accordance with their relative value and pertinence.

No ingenuity can draw water from a well that is dry. Only the Omnipotent can create. The loftiest genius

does not feed on itself and spin cobwebs out of its own bowels. It is essentially receptive, recombining and recasting the funded thought of the ages. Hence the ancients called Memory the mother of all the Muses, and Chateaubriand averred that the highest productions are composed only of recollections. Virgil, Dante, Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, and Shakespeare were debtors to an incalculable extent, illustrating Molière's principle, that he recovered his property wherever he found it; and Emerson's, 'Thought is the property of him who can entertain it, and of him who can adequately place it.' All that they had read, as well as all that they had seen, the results of reading, experience, and reflection, went into the mill, suffering

'A sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.'

The famous writers and speakers of the world, we repeat, have felt the importance of filling well the storehouse of the mind, in preparation whether for some special task or for their life-work. They have been greedy devourers of books, seizing and utilizing every appropriate image or apt thought which they could pick up in their reading. Robertson spent much of his time in the study of geology, chemistry, and other sciences, to give strength and freshness to his sermons. Hundreds of passages in Milton are paraphrases or literal translations of passages in the Greek and Latin poets, while his diction has been affirmed to be the elaborated outcome of the best words of all antecedent poetry. Curran, the orator, studied English and classical literature with indefatigable zeal. Burke owed his vast knowledge and inexhaustible vocabulary to an extensive acquaintance with books. His speeches abound with poetical gems, especially from Virgil and Milton. Erskine committed a large part of the latter to memory, and so familiarized himself with Shakespeare



that, it is said, he could have conversed on almost any subject for days together in the phrases of the great English dramatist. 'In literature,' Choate was wont to say, 'you find ideas. There one should daily replenish his stock. The whole range of polite literature should be vexed for thoughts.' Pope was a multifarious reader, but diligently selective; adopting all poetic ornaments, graceful contrasts, noble sentiments, and storing them away as his literary wardrobe; combining and classifying into a mental dictionary, so as to be ready at his call, the materials which might serve to round his periods or illuminate his ideas. What he heard, moreover, he was attentive to retain. If conversation offered anything, he committed it to paper. If a thought or phrase, happier than usual, occurred to him, he wrote it down. 'What is a great man,' asks Emerson, 'but one of great affinities, who takes up into himself all arts, sciences, all knowables, as his food?' Elsewhere he asserts that the great man must be a great reader, and possess great assimilating power. He is greatest who converts most of his predecessors and contemporaries into nutriment for himself.

**Disposition.**—It is assumed that you have thus far had constantly in vision the status of your intended production; that you have gradually developed certain leading thoughts which should enter into it, or perhaps that you have prepared a scheme of topics—mere hints to guide your thinking and investigation; also, that under each of these principal heads you have decided upon certain subordinate ones; and that you have more or less closely examined the ideas met with or evolved, to find whether they have the characteristics which justify or require their adoption. Thus, suppose your subject to be

Gossip,

and your outline :

1. Origin —

- (1) Man naturally a communicative being.
- (2) That of which the mind is full will come out in expression.

2. Moral aspects —

- (1) A constant infraction of the Golden Rule.
- (2) Evil effects upon individuals and society.

3. Encouraged by caterers for the public press.

4. Cure for gossip — culture.

Suppose, again, your subject to be

THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

Status: *A beneficent invention.*

Outline:

Promotes intelligence — Comparison between past and present — Influence on commerce — On security — On morality — On peace — On civilization.

Or, once more,

MEMORY.

Scheme:

What it is — Its value — At what period usually developed — Kinds — Should be selective — Marvellous feats — How impaired — How improved.

A sermon by F. W. Robertson on the text, 'And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled,' presents the following form:

1. Alienation —

- (1) God from man.
- (2) Man from God.

2. Reconciliation —

- (1) Man to God.
- (2) Man to man.
- (3) Man to himself.
- (4) Man to his duty.

The seventh chapter of Dr. Draper's *Conflict between Science and Religion* presents the following scheme: Subject, which is the same as the title of the work,

## CONFLICT BETWEEN SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

Status: *Controversy respecting the age of the earth.*

Classification:

Scriptural view that the earth is only six thousand years old, and that it was made in a week.—Patristic chronology founded on the ages of the patriarchs.—Difficulties arising from different estimates in different versions of the Bible.—Legend of the Deluge.—The repeopling.—The Tower of Babel; the confusion of tongues.—The primitive language.—Discovery by Cassini of the oblateness of the planet Jupiter.—Discovery by Newton of the oblateness of the Earth.—Deduction that she has been modelled by mechanical causes.—Confirmation of this by geological discoveries respecting aqueous rocks; corroboration by organic remains.—The necessity of admitting enormously long periods of time.—Displacement of the doctrine of Creation by that of Evolution.—Discoveries respecting the Antiquity of Man.—The time-scale and space-scale of the world are infinite.—Moderation with which the discussion of the Age of the World has been conducted.

The ninth chapter of the first volume of Gibbon's *Rome* gives the following:

## GERMANY.

Status: *The state of Germany till the invasion of the barbarians in the time of the Emperor Decius.*

Analysis:

1. Physical features { Extent.  
Climate—effects on the natives.
2. Origin of the Germans—fables and conjectures.
3. General condition { Indolence.  
Taste for strong liquors.  
Savagery.
4. Political aspect { Freedom.  
Popular assemblies.  
Authority of princes and magistrates.
5. German chastity—its probable causes.
6. Religion { Effects in peace.  
Effects in war.

7. The bards.

8. Causes which checked progress { Want of arms.  
Want of discipline.  
Civil dissensions.

9. Distinction of the German tribe.

10. Numbers.

Starting with a rough draft of what you are to communicate, you will bear in mind that the analytic process must accompany the processes of reflection and research. The former should be shaped in the growing light of the latter, which it serves to direct. Before proceeding to write, there should be a final survey of the field of inquiry, and a final revision of your abstract, or plan. This is the time to ensure sequence and unity of parts. The distributing of ideas to their appropriate places so as to form a complete, harmonious whole, is called *disposition*.

The plan, or right division and subdivision of your subject, must be a prominent object of attention and study. It signifies little how opulent you may be, if you have no command over your treasures. Hundreds can produce a crowd of good ideas upon any subject, for one that can marshal them with best effect. Says Vinet: 'Good thoughts . . . are abundant. The art of organizing them is not so common. . . . We should perhaps be within bounds in saying that disposition in a discourse is not of more secondary importance than the mode of aggregation of molecules in a physical substance; this mode in a great measure constitutes the nature of the body.' Originality, according to Pascal, consists less in the newness of the thoughts than in their combination. 'Every man, as he walks through the streets,' says De Quincey, 'may contrive to jot down an independent thought; a short-hand memorandum of a great truth. . . . Standing on one leg, you may accomplish this. The labor of composition begins when you have to put

your separate threads of thought into a loom; to weave them into a continuous whole; to connect, to introduce them; to blow them out or expand them; to carry them to a close.' The following passage from Burke is at once an enforcement and an illustration of method:

My second condition necessary to justify me in touching the charter is—Whether the Company's abuse of their trust in regard to this great object be an abuse of great atrocity. I shall beg your permission to consider their conduct in two lights: first, the political, and then the commercial. Their political conduct, for distinctness, I divide again into two heads—the external, in which I mean to comprehend their conduct in their federal capacity as it relates to powers and states independent; the other internal, namely, their conduct to the countries either immediately subject to the Company, or to those who, under the apparent government of native sovereigns, are in a state much lower and more miserable than common subjection.

The attention, sir, which I wish to preserve to method, will not be considered as unnecessary or affected. Nothing else can help me to selection out of the infinite mass of materials which have passed under my eye, or can keep my mind steady to the great leading points I have in view.

If you would write with confidence and certainty, be methodical. Having found all the cardinal points into which, as it may seem, your subject should be resolved, examine them critically, as well as the subdivisions of each (if any such), to see that the order is organic, carrying the line of thought naturally and suggestively. Let no topic be raised to the rank of coördinate when it should be subordinate. Avoid tedious multiplication. Your skeleton or framework, of course, will fix the limits and determine the contents of the three grand parts of discourse,—the *Introduction*, the *Discussion* (or body), and the *Conclusion*.

The introduction, or exordium, is designed to open the interview between speaker or hearer, or between writer and reader. While usually distinct from the main idea of

the discourse, it should be closely connected with it, briefly conducting to it without any appearance of artifice or force. It should contain only what is easily understood and will be readily admitted. It should awaken interest, if not curiosity, and should dispose the mind pleurably, if not eagerly, to what follows. Though it need not be written last, its determination should be deferred till the end proposed is distinctly apprehended, and the means to be employed are clearly discerned. You can introduce better when you know what is to be introduced. Cicero tells us that it was his custom first to plan and digest the materials gathered, and last of all to consider with what he should begin; for, if he attempted the introduction first, nothing occurred to him but what was trifling and commonplace. The length of the introduction will depend upon the nature and extent of the composition. It would be in poor taste to erect a huge portico before a small building. What is to be desired is not a delay or an interval more or less well occupied, but a preparation. The opening of Webster's rejoinder to Hayne is novel and striking:

Mr. President.—When the mariner has been tossed for many days in thick weather, and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course. Let us imitate this prudence, and, before we float farther on the waves of this debate, refer to the point from which we departed, that we may at least be able to conjecture where we now are. I ask for the reading of the resolution before the Senate.

The exordium is frequently omitted altogether, as in short essays, and, occasionally, in other productions where the discussion can be entered upon at once without abruptness. Cicero's first oration against Catiline is an example:

*Quousque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra* — 'How long, Catiline, will you abuse our patience?'

Even more important is the conclusion, or peroration,

which furnishes the proper means of retiring from the discussion. It has place after the subject has been completely treated, as the exordium has before the subject has been entered upon. It may be descriptive, emotional—purely an appeal to the feelings, emphatic—an emphasis of special propositions, retrospective—a recapitulation or condensed summary of what has been said. It is here that you are to reap the harvest of the seed sown at the outset. Examine the sermons of Channing, Robertson, Beecher, or the essays of Addison, Montague, Macaulay, Hunt, Landor, Emerson; and observe, for yourselves, the characters which the introduction and the conclusion present.

But discourse cannot have the energy or elegance of a living whole till suitable connecting links are found; that is, transitions from one part to another which shall give coherence to the constituent elements. Their purpose is twofold and opposite,—to distinguish and to unite. A good transition combines several qualities. It should look both to what precedes and to what follows, and should do this in agreement with the common modes of associating the thoughts, making the points of contact so plain that they can be instantly discovered. It is not sufficient that the connection be real and necessary—it must be apparent. Says John Quincy Adams of these intermediate ideas, or references, whether announced with studious formality or involved in the shell of indirect allusion: ‘The same natural aversion of mankind to abruptness at the commencement or close of an oration, which has established the custom of opening with an exordium and of ending with a peroration, has erected these *bridges* over the various inlets which intersect the different regions of the province.’ It is this demand that has created the continuative particles, whose use and value have been elsewhere remarked: *however, moreover,*

*indeed, thus, consequently, further, again, likewise, etc.* Observe how Goldsmith's *Traveller* passes, in its description of countries, from Italy to Switzerland:

My soul, turn from them;—turn we to survey  
Where rougher climes a nobler race display.

Similarly from Switzerland to France:

Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast  
May sit like falcons, cowering on the nest:  
But all the gentler morals such as play  
Through life's more cultured walks, and charm the way,  
These, far dispersed, on timorous pinions fly,  
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.  
To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,  
I turn—and France displays her bright domain.

Milton, in revising *Paradise Lost*, made a division of the seventh book at the end of Gabriel's narrative to *Adam*, giving, for the first line of the resulting eighth book,

To whom thus Adam gratefully replied.

But to avoid a beginning so abrupt, three lines were added, by way of transition, and Adam's reply is now introduced by the following beautiful picture:

The angel ended, and in Adam's ear  
So charming left his voice, that he a while  
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear;  
Then, as new waked, thus gratefully replied.

**Amplification.**—The outline being determined, the next step is to fill it up—so to enlarge upon the ideas expressed under the various heads as to convert the fleshless abstract into a vivid exhibition. This process is called amplification. 'It is the moral and intellectual lens which, without altering the nature of the things themselves, swells and contracts their dimensions by the medium through which it presents them to the eye.'

<sup>1</sup> John Quincy Adams.



The bare enunciation of a fact or truth does not afford time for digestion and assimilation. The mind must be detained, if it is to be impressed. Thus the proposition 'Ideal scenes of felicity are like remote objects in a landscape, whose distance makes them fair,' is intelligible, but mark how the poet, by expanding it, makes it felt:

At summer eve, when Heaven's ethereal bow  
Spans with bright arch the glittering hills below,  
Why to yon mountain turns the musing eye,  
Whose sunbright summit mingles with the sky?  
Why do those cliffs of shadowy tint appear  
More sweet than all the landscape smiling near?  
'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,  
And robes the mountain in its azure hue.  
Thus, with delight, we linger to survey  
The promised joys of life's unmeasured way;  
Thus, from afar, each dim-discover'd scene  
More pleasing seems than all the past has been,  
And every form that Fancy can repair  
From dark oblivion, glows divinely there.—*Campbell.*

The nature of the thought and the end in view must decide what means of amplification are most suitable. The two of chief importance are enumeration and comparison. Thus Addison amplifies the general truth that nature is full of life, by citing instances, singly trifling, perhaps, but, collectively, full of convincing force:

Every part of matter is peopled, every green leaf swarms with inhabitants. There is scarce a single humor in the body of a man, or of any other animal, in which our glasses do not discover myriads of living creatures. The surface of animals is also covered with other animals, which are in the same manner the basis of other animals, that live upon it. Nay, we find in the most solid bodies, as in marble itself, innumerable cells and cavities, that are crowded with such imperceptible inhabitants as are too little for the naked eye to discover. On the other hand, if we look into the more bulky parts of nature, we see the seas, lakes, rivers, teeming with numberless kinds of living creatures. We find every mountain and marsh, wilderness and wood, plentifully stocked with birds and beasts; and

every part of matter affording proper necessities and conveniences for the livelihood of multitudes which inhabit it.

The elaborate mention of details is a leading quality of Bunyan, Defoe, and Carlyle. It would be difficult, however, to find a more striking example than Shakespeare's description of Queen Mab:

She comes

In shape no bigger than an agate stone  
On the forefinger of an alderman;  
Drawn with a team of little atomies  
Athwart men's noses, as they lie asleep;  
Her wagon-spokes made of long spinners' legs;  
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;  
The traces, of the smallest spider's web;  
The collars, of the moon-shine's watery beams;  
Her whip of cricket's bones; the lash of film;  
Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,  
Not half so big as a round little worm,  
Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid.  
Her chariot is an empty hazelnut,  
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,  
Time out of mind the fairies' coachmakers.

It is obviously impossible to give a list of all the means of amplification, which are as numerous as the ways by which thought is clearly, strongly, and elegantly expressed. It rarely happens that a writer is restricted to one of them. Generally different modes are combined, as in the following exquisite passage:

Did you never in walking in the fields come across a large flat stone, which had lain, nobody knows how long, just where you found it, with the grass forming a little hedge, as it were, all round it close to its edges? and have you not, in obedience to a kind of feeling that told you it had been lying there long enough, insinuated your stick or your foot or your fingers under its edge, and turned it over as a housewife turns a cake, when she says to herself, 'It's done brown enough by this time'? What an odd revelation, and what an unforeseen and unpleasant surprise to a small community, the very existence of which you had not suspected, until the

sudden dismay and scattering among the members produced by your turning the old stone over ! Blades of grass flattened down, colorless, matted together, as if they had been bleached and ironed; hideous crawling creatures, some of them coleopterous, or horny-shelled — turtle-bugs one wants to call them; some of them softer, but cunningly spread out and compressed like Lepine watches (nature never loses a crack or a crevice, mind you, or a joint in a tavern bedstead, but she always has one of her flat-pattern live time-keepers to slide into it); black, glossy crickets, with their long filaments sticking out like the whips of four-horse stage-coaches; motionless slug-like creatures; young larvæ, perhaps more horrible in their pulpy stillness than even in the infernal wriggle of maturity ! But no sooner is the stone turned, and the wholesome light of day let in upon this compressed and blinded community of creeping things, than all of them which enjoy the luxury of legs — and some of them have a good many — rush round wildly, butting each other and everything in their way, and end in a general stampede for underground retreats from the region poisoned by sunshine. Next year you will find the grass growing tall and green where the stone lay; the ground-bird builds her nest where the beetle had his hole; the dandelion and the buttercup are growing there, and the broad fans of insect angels open and shut over their golden disks as the rhythmic waves of blissful consciousness pulsate through their glorified being.

The stone is ancient error. The grass is human nature, borne down and bleached of all its color by it. The shapes which are found beneath are the crafty beings that thrive in darkness, and the weaker organisms kept helpless by it. He who turns the stone over is whosoever puts the staff of truth to the old lying incubus, no matter whether he do it with a serious face or a laughing one. The next year stands for the coming time. Then shall the nature which had lain blanched and broken rise in its full stature and native hues in the sunshine. Then shall God's minstrels build their nests in the hearts of a new-born humanity. Then shall beauty, divinely taking outlines and colors, light upon the souls of men, as the butterfly — image of the beatified spirit rising from the dust — soars from the shell that held a poor grub, which would never have found wings had not the stone been lifted.—*Dr. Holmes.*

Quotations, if tasteful and judicious, give completeness and finish. 'By necessity,' says Emerson, 'by proclivity,

by delight, we quote.' Never hesitate to quote an author who will strengthen or illuminate your position. Great names have great weight. 'It is generally supposed,' says D'Israeli, 'that where there is no quotation there will be found most originality. . . . The greater part of our writers, in consequence, have become so original that no one cares to imitate them; and those who never quote, in return are seldom quoted.' Probably no writer has quoted more copiously and forcefully than Sir William Hamilton, himself one of the most erudite and brilliant of men. Be solicitous to quote aptly and usefully. Emerson well says: 'In literature quotation is good only when the writer whom I follow goes my way, and, being better mounted than I, gives me a cast, as we say; but if I like the gay equipage so well as to go out of my road, I had better have gone afoot.'

#### EXERCISES.

1. What is the status of *Macbeth*, of Campbell's *Last Man*, or of Holland's *Bitter-Sweet*?

2. Criticise and amend the following analysis of The College Burning:

- (1) The smothered spreading of the fire.
- (2) The kindling of the fire.
- (3) Progress from part to part of the building.
- (4) The bursting out of the flames.
- (5) Importance of Education.
- (6) The ruins.
- (7) The sin of carelessness.
- (8) The dying out of the fire.
- (9) Classical study.
- (10) The utility of fire departments.
- (11) Relative destructiveness of fire and water.
- (12) Cause of the fire.

3. Correct the faults in the subjoined analysis of Anger:

- (1) What it is.
- (2) Importance of self-control.

- (3) Feelings consequent upon the indulgence of anger.
- (4) Effects on the individual and on society.
- (5) Moral character of this passion.
- (6) Quotations — what others say of it.
- (7) A person in a violent fit of passion has the appearance of a maniac.
- (8) An angry man opens his mouth and shuts his eyes.—*Cato*.

4. Prepare an analysis of *Hamlet*, *Richelieu*, first book of *Paradise Lost*, Irving's *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, or Hamilton's lecture on *The Causes of Philosophy*.

5. Take account of your present knowledge or opinions on each of the following subjects; after reflection and (if necessary) after investigation, decide upon the point of view from which the subject shall be regarded — if the status is not given in the form in which the subject is presented for treatment; read, either as you may elect or as indicated by the accompanying references; determine the general heads, and arrange the special under them, or revise your provisional analysis if such has been made; amplify — dispose your materials in effective order:

(1) HAPPINESS MORE IN PURSUIT THAN IN POSSESSION.

See Montaigne's *Essays*, p. 383; *Royal Path of Life*, p. 384; Hamilton's *Metaphysics*, Lecture I, pp. 6-9; Haven's *Mental Philosophy*, p. 512; Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Vol. I, p. 16.

(2) CONSCIENCE.

See Montaigne's *Essays*, pp. 229, 231; Gladstone's *Might of Right*, p. 110; Smiles' *Duty*, p. 13; Clarke's *Self-Culture*, p. 195; Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*, pp. 145, 147, 303; *Popular Science Monthly*, Vol. IX, p. 80; *ibid*, Vol. XIII, p. 5; Joseph Cook's *Conscience*, pp. 13, 87, 171; Wayland's *Elements of Moral Science*, pp. 49, 59, 71; Hoyt's *Cyclopædia of Practical Quotations*, pp. 61-63; Haven's *Mental Philosophy*, p. 314; Schuyler's *Empirical and Rational Psychology*, pp. 439, 489; Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Vol. II, p. 35; Shakespeare's *Henry VI*, Act 3, Scene 1; *Richard III*, Act 1, Scene 4, Act 5, Scene 3; *Henry VIII*, Act 2, Scene 2, Act 3, Scene 2.

(3) DOES POVERTY OR RICHES DEVELOP CHARACTER BEST.

See *Royal Path of Life*, p. 120; Hamerton's *Intellectual Life*, pp. 187, 341; Le Roy Pope's *Modern Fancies and Follies*, p. 79; Talmage's *Daily Thoughts*, p. 263; Holland's *Gold Foil*, p. 179; Holland's *Letters to the Joneses*, p. 335; Bacon's *Essays*, XXXIV;

Mathews' *Getting On in the World*, p. 280; Smiles' *Self-Help*, pp. 40, 342, 344; *Nation*, Vol. III, p. 215; *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. XLVI, p. 846; Whipple's *Success and its Conditions*, p. 273; George Macdonald's *Cheerful Words*, p. 67; Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Vol. I, pp. 4-5.

#### (4) FRIENDSHIP.

See Alcott's *Table-Talk*, p. 76; Bacon's *Essays*, XXVII; Emerson's *Essays*, First Series, VI; Greeley's *Hints toward Reforms*, p. 357; Mitchell's *Reveries of a Bachelor*, p. 212; Munger's *On the Threshold*, p. 31; Foster's *New Cyclopædia of Practical Quotations*, pp. 172-5; George Macdonald's *Cheerful Words*, p. 167; *North American Review*, Vol. LXXXIII, p. 104, Vol. CXXXIX, p. 453; *Living Age*, Vol. CXXIX, p. 214; Thackeray's *London Sketches*, pp. 26, 94; Alcott's *Table-Talk*, p. 77.

#### (5) DANCING.

See Blackwood's *Magazine*, Vol. VI, p. 43; Talmage's *Abomination of Modern Society*, p. 79; Chambers' *Encyclopædia*, Vol. III, p. 412; Munger's *On the Threshold*, p. 191; Thomason's *Fashionable Amusements*, p. 115; *Living Age*, LXXIII, p. 55; *Penny Magazine*, Vol. V, p. 1; Leigh Hunt's *Seer*, p. 105; Wise's *Young Lady's Counselor*, p. 199.

#### (6) NOVEL-READING.

See Potter's *American Monthly*, Vol. XII, p. 187; *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. XLIII, p. 356; Putnam's *Magazine*, Vol. IV, p. 389; *Living Age*, Vol. CXL, p. 349; *Nation*, Vol. II, p. 138; Talmage's *Daily Thoughts*, p. 327; Holland's *Every-Day Topics*, p. 269; *Royal Path of Life*, p. 162; Le Roy Pope's *Modern Fancies and Follies*, p. 172; *Princeton Review*, Vol. XLI, p. 202.

#### (7) A TASTE FOR LITERATURE.

See Dr. Porter's *Books and Reading*, pp. 30, 37-47, 72-80; Montaigne's *Essays*, p. 254; Hamerton's *Intellectual Life*, pp. 147, 353, 384; Munger's *On the Threshold*, p. 155; Beecher's *Star Papers*, p. 250; Emerson's *Society and Solitude*, p. 167; *Scribner's Monthly*, Vol. XV, p. 681; *Living Age*, LXIII, p. 72; Clarke's *Self-Culture*, p. 307; Isaac D'Israeli's *Miscellanies*, Vol. I, p. 22.

#### (8) FLOWERS.

See Beecher's *Star Papers*, p. 93; Beecher's *Fruit, Flowers, and Farming*, p. 117; Ruskin's *Studies of Wayside Flowers*; *All the Year Round*, Vol. VII, p. 414; *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. X, p. 694;

Living Age, Vol. XIX, p. 241; Chambers' Journal, Vol. XXII, p. 117; Ruskin's Modern Painters, Vol. II, p. 91, Vol. III, pp. 193, 227, Vol. V, pp. 88, 92, 97; Hoyt and Ward's Cyclopædia of Practical Quotations, pp. 125-132.

#### (9) CO-EDUCATION.

See The Nation, Vol. X, p. 134; *ibid*, Vol. XI, pp. 24, 383; *ibid*, Vol. XVI, p. 349; *ibid*, Vol. XXIX, p. 364; Eclectic Magazine, Vol. XLII, p. 208; Living Age, Vol. CXXXVI, p. 685; Holland's Every-Day Topics, p. 237; American Journal of Education, Vol. XVII, p. 385; International Review, Vol. XIV, p. 130; North American Review, Vol. CXXXVI, p. 25.

#### (10) DREAMS.

See Haven's Mental Philosophy, p. 351; George Macdonald's Cheerful Words, p. 143; Eclectic Magazine, Vol. LXXXII, p. 279; *ibid*, Vol. XCVI, p. 27; *ibid*, Vol. LXVI, p. 701; Atlantic Monthly, Vol. XLVI, p. 402; North American Review, Vol. CXXIV, p. 179; Living Age, Vol. CXL, p. 314; Seaffield's Literature and Curiosities of Dreams; Boismont's Hallucinations, p. 159; Hoyt's Cyclopædia of Practical Quotations, pp. 96-8; also various works on Mental Science.

#### (11) INFLUENCE OF THE CRUSADERS.

See Bryce's Holy Roman Empire, pp. 164, 166, 167, 193, 205, 209; Lewis' History of Germany, pp. 171, 185, 213, 215; Michaud's History of the Crusaders, Vol. I, Introduction, p. 24, Vol. III, pp. 326, 339; Hallam's Middle Ages, Index; Gibbon's Rome, Index; Yeats' Growth and Vicissitudes of Commerce, pp. 171, 174; Hallam's Literature of Europe, Vol. I, pp. 113, 146; Milman's Latin Christianity, Vol. IV, pp. 24-34, 54, 68, Vol. VIII, pp. 370, 440; Palgrave's History of Normandy and England, Vol. VI, chap. xi; May's Democracy in Europe, Vol. I, pp. 254-256; Blanqui's History of Political Economy, pp. 125-133, 147.

#### (12) LEADING CAUSES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

See Thiers' French Revolution, Vol. I, chap. i; Comparative Display of Different Opinions of British Writers on French Revolution, Vol. I, pp. 1, 41, 80, 113, 129, 131, 148, 155, 159, 109, 604, Vol. II, p. 450; Van Laun's French Revolutionary Epoch, Introduction, Vol. I, chaps. i, ii; Taine's French Revolution, Vol. I, chaps. i, ii; *ibid*, Ancient Regime, Book V, chaps. i, ii; Abbott's French Revolution, chap. iv; Schlosser's History of Eighteenth Century, Vol. VI,

chap. i; Von Sybel's History of the French Revolution, Vol. I, Book I, chaps. i-iii, Book III, chap. i; Adams' (C. K.) Monarchy and Democracy in France, p. 3; Dyer's Modern Europe, Vol. III, pp. 507-547; Alison's History of Europe (Edinburgh, 1835), chaps. ii, iii; Kitchin's History of France, pp. 362, 492, 503, 506; North American Review, Vol. CXXXVII, p. 388; Mason's History of France; Carlyle's French Revolution.

#### (13) TRIAL BY JURY.

See Stubb's Constitutional History of England, Vol. I, pp. 275, 395, 472, 473, 488, 489, 607-609, 620 (Grand Jury), Vol. I, pp. 469, 617; Stubb's Select Charters, Part IV; Creasy's English Constitution, chap. xiii; Forsyth's (Wm.) History of Trial by Jury; De Tocqueville's Democracy in America, Index; Taswell-Langmead's Constitutional History of England, pp. 90, 128, 158, 161-170; Stephens' De Lome's English Constitution, Vol. II, p. 788; Blackstone's Commentaries (Covley's edition), Vol. II, p. 347; North American Review, Vol. XCII, p. 297; *ibid.*, Vol. CXIX, p. 219; Nile's Register, Vol. XIII, p. 139; Century, Vol. XXVI, p. 299; International Review, Vol. XIV, p. 158.

#### (14) ENGLISH DRAMA.

See Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric; Hazlitt's Literature of the Age of Elizabeth; Warton's History of English Poetry; Hallam's Literature of Europe; New American Cyclopædia; Knight's, Hudson's, or Malone's Life of Shakespeare; Chambers's Cyclopædia of English Literature; Encyclopædia Britannica; North American Review, Vols. XXXVIII and CXXVI; Galaxy, Vol. XIX; Eclectic Review, Vol. XC; Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. LXXIX; Collier's English Dramatic Poetry.

6. Discuss the life and work of Goethe under the heads of biography, writings, style, rank (among the world's authors), character, and influence.

See Emerson's Representative Men; Carlyle's Essays; Hutton's Essays in Literary Criticism; Hurst's Life and Literature in the Fatherland; Goodwin's Cyclopædia of Biography; Tuttle's German Leaders; American Cyclopædia; Encyclopædia Britannica; Nation, Vol. XXXII; Edinburgh Review, Vol. CVI; Living Age, Vol. CXXIX; Eclectic Magazine, Vol. LXXX; Contemporary Review, November, 1884.



## CHAPTER X.

### FORMS OF EXPRESSION.

What I would therefore recommend to you is, that before you sit down to write on any subject you would spend some days in considering it, putting down at the same time, in short hints, every thought which occurs to you as proper to make a part of your intended piece. When you have thus obtained a collection of the thoughts, examine them carefully with this view, to find which of them is proper to be presented first to the mind of the reader, that he, being possessed of that, may be better disposed to receive what you intend for the second; and thus I would have you put a figure before each thought to mark its future place in your composition. For so every preceding composition preparing the mind for that which is to follow, and the reader often anticipating it, he proceeds with ease and pleasure and approbation, as seeming continually to meet his own thoughts. In this mode you have a chance for a perfect production; because the mind attending first to the sentiments alone, next to the method alone, each part is likely to be better performed, and, I think, too, in less time.—DR. FRANKLIN.

**T**HE several kinds of composition may be considered under four general types.

**Description.**—Description is the exhibition of the coexistent parts and qualities of an object, real or imaginary, material or spiritual, by means of words. It is akin to drawing, painting, sculpture. It cannot equal them in vividness, but what they can only suggest, it can fully recount. Its picture contains more information, more thought, more enlivening touches. How much, for instance, does Byron add to the expressive power of marble in his fervid lines on the dying gladiator:

I see before me the Gladiator lie:  
He leans upon his hand — his manly brow  
Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low —  
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow

From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now  
The arena swims around him—he is gone  
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who  
won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes  
Were with his heart, and that was far away.  
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,  
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay.  
*There* were his young barbarians all at play,  
*There* was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,  
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—  
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire  
And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

Description is often said to be *objective* when it relates to things perceptible by the senses; *subjective*, when it relates to things cognizable by the mind. The former, which includes the works of nature and of art, whether in rest or in motion, is most conspicuous in books of travel or adventure, in writings which give an account of cities or civilized countries, as Kane's voyages to the Arctic regions, Livingstone's explorations in Africa, Prescott's histories of Mexico and Peru. The latter refers especially to the delineation of mental states, as in Satan's or Hamlet's soliloquy; of the moral and intellectual faculties, as in scientific treatises; of individual character, as in biographies; of emotions, as seen in the face. The second, like the first, regards natural scenery and human handiwork, but it does so interpretatively, reflectively. Thus the one, the more internal, often arises from the other, the more external; and both are intermingled, as in Carlyle's portrayal of Cromwell's personal features:

Massive stature; big, massive head, of somewhat leonine aspect; wart above the right eyebrow; nose of considerable, blunt, aquiline proportions; strict, yet copious lips; full of all tremulous sensibilities; and also, if need be, of all fiercenesses and rigors; deep, loving eyes—call them grave, call them stern—looking from under those

craggy brows as if in lifelong sorrow, and yet not thinking it sorrow, thinking it only labor and endeavor.

Again, if objects are delineated in succession and detail, pretty much as their aspects might appear to a spectator who from an eminence allows his gaze to wander here and there irregularly, the description is said to be *panoramic*, as in Goldsmith's *Traveller*, Longfellow's *Building of the Ship*, and Defoe's *Voyage Round the World*. Thus:

They [the Spaniards] had not advanced far, when, turning an angle of the sierra, they suddenly came on a view which more than compensated the toils of the preceding day. It was that of the valley of Mexico, or Tenochtitlan, as more commonly called by the natives; which, with its picturesque assemblage of water, woodland, and cultivated plains, its shining cities and shadowy hills, was spread out like some gay and gorgeous panorama before them. In the highly rarefied atmosphere of these upper regions, even remote objects have a brilliancy of coloring and a distinctness of outline which seem to annihilate distance. Stretching far away at their feet, were seen noble forests of oak, sycamore, and cedar, and beyond yellow fields of maize, and the towering maguëy, intermingled with orchards and blooming gardens; for flowers, in such demand for their religious festivals, were even more abundant in this populous valley than in other parts of Anahuac. In the centre of the great basin were beheld the lakes, occupying then a much larger portion of its surface than at present, their borders thickly studded with towns and hamlets; and in the midst — like some Indian empress with her coronal of pearls — the fair city of Mexico, with her white towers and pyramidal temples, reposing, as it were, on the bosom of the waters — the far-famed 'Venice of the Aztecs.' High over all rose the royal hill of Chapultepec, the residence of the Mexican monarchs, crowned with the same grove of gigantic cypresses which at this day fling their broad shadows over the land. In the distance beyond the blue waters of the lake, and nearly screened by intervening foliage, was seen a shining speck, the rival capital of Tezcuco; and still further on, the dark belt of porphyry, girdling the valley around, like a rich setting which nature had devised for the fairest of her jewels. Such was the beautiful vision which broke on the eyes of the conquerors.—*Prescott*.

If, however, the parts are grouped for artistic effect about some common centre, which, in the midst of particulars, is kept constantly in view, the description is called *scenic*. Macaulay thus presents the interior of Westminster Hall at the trial of Warren Hastings, the accused being the central figure of the brilliant assemblage:

The gray old walls were hung with scarlet. The long galleries were crowded by an audience such as has rarely excited the fears or the emulation of an orator. There were gathered together from all parts of a great, free, enlightened, and prosperous realm grace and female loveliness, wit and learning, the representatives of every science and of every art. There were seated around the queen the fair-haired young daughters of the house of Brunswick. There the ambassadors of great kings and commonwealths gazed with admiration on a spectacle which no other country in the world could present. There Siddons, in the prime of her majestic beauty, looked with emotion on a scene surpassing all the imitations of the stage. There the historian of the Roman Empire thought of the days when Cicero pleaded the cause of Sicily against Verres, and when, before a senate which still retained some show of freedom, Tacitus thundered against the oppressor of Africa. There were seen side by side the greatest painter and the greatest scholar of the age. The spectacle had allured Reynolds from that easel which has preserved to us the thoughtful foreheads of so many writers and statesmen, and the sweet smiles of so many noble matrons. It had induced Parr to suspend his labors on that dark and profound mine from which he had extracted a vast treasure of erudition—a treasure too often buried in the earth, too often paraded with injudicious and inelegant ostentation, but still precious, massive, and splendid. There appeared the voluptuous charms of her to whom the heir of the throne had in secret plighted his faith. There, too, was she, the beautiful mother of a beautiful race, the Saint Cecilia, whose delicate features, lighted up by love and music, art has rescued from the common decay. There were the members of that brilliant society which quoted, criticised, and exchanged repartees under the rich peacock hanging of Mrs. Montague; and there the ladies whose lips, more persuasive than those of Fox himself, had carried the Westminster election against palace and treasury, shone around Georgiana, duchess of Devonshire.

Usually, in objective description, it will promote unity and definiteness to characterize the whole, the contents being given in the order that they occupy in the plan. A field, for example, is triangular, quadrangular, etc.; a hill, conical, or truncated; a town, circular and compact, or long and straggling; a tract of country, heart-shaped. The outline, the size, a central object, or an epithet may furnish the desired comprehensive type, generally, though not always, stated first:

The battle of Waterloo was fought on a piece of ground resembling a capital A. The English were at the apex, the French at the feet, and the battle was decided about the centre.—*Victor Hugo*.

So work the honey-bees,  
Creatures that by a rule in nature teach  
The act of order to a *peopled kingdom*.  
They have a king and officers of sorts:  
Where some, like magistrates, correct at home;  
Others, like merchants, venture trade abroad;  
Others, like soldiers, armed in their stings,  
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds,  
Which pillage they with merry march bring home  
To the tent-royal of their emperor;  
Who, busied in his majesty, surveys  
The singing masons building roofs of gold,  
The civil citizens kneading up the honey,  
The poor mechanic porters crowding in  
Their heavy burdens at his narrow gate,  
The sad-eyed justice, with his surly hum,  
Delivering o'er to executors pale  
The lazy yawning drone.—*Shakespeare*.

Care must be taken that the points selected shall be not self-contradictory or trivial, but true, and, as far as possible, new, essential, striking; determinate and concrete, such as particularize strongly; harmonious, such as blend readily into one image; concisely and simply put, so as not to weary the attention by exaggerating or overloading. These directions are comprehended in this:

endeavor to present such features or ideas as a sculptor or a painter could lay hold of and work out after you. Thus:

Such is the poor moorland tract of country; Zorndorf the *centre* of it,—where the battle is likely to be:—Zorndorf and environs, a bare *quasi-island* among these woods; extensive *bald crown* of the landscape, girt with a *frizzle* of firwoods all round.—*Carlyle*.

It was a mountain at whose verdant feet  
A spacious plain, outstretched in circuit wide,  
Lay pleasant; from its side two rivers flow'd,  
The one winding, the other straight, and left between  
Fair champaign with less rivers intervein'd,  
Then meeting join'd their tribute to the sea;  
With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the hills;  
Huge cities and high tower'd, that well might seem  
The seats of mightiest monarchs; and so large  
The prospect was, that here and there was room  
For barren desert, fountainless and dry.—*Milton*.

Gather abundant material. Collect your own thoughts, and all the information within reach. Read what others have written upon the subject. If you are to describe something with which you may become acquainted by observation, take a note-book, and make memoranda of what you see. Says Lockhart of Scott:

On his visiting Rokeby, he said to me, 'You have often given me materials for a romance; now I want a good robber's cave, and an old church of the right sort.' We rode out, and he found what he wanted in the old slate quarries of Brignall, and the ruined abbey of Egglestone. I observed him noting down even the peculiar little wild-flowers and herbs that accidentally grew around and on the side of a bold crag, near his intended cave of Guy Denzil; and could not help saying, that as he was not to be upon oath in his work, daisies, violets, and primroses would be as poetical as any of the humbler plants he was examining. I laughed, in short, at his scrupulousness; but I understood him when he replied, that in nature herself no two scenes are exactly alike; and that whoever copies truly what is before his eyes, will possess the same variety in his descriptions, and exhibit apparently an imagination as boundless as the range of nature in the scene he records; whereas, whoever

trusts to imagination will soon find his own mind circumscribed and contracted to a few favorite images, and the repetition of these will, sooner or later, produce that very monotony and barrenness which have always haunted descriptive poetry in the hands of any but patient worshippers of truth.

Remember that associated feelings and circumstances are a great aid to description. In this way, as in various others — interpretation, comparison, inference — the reader is put in possession of what is nearly or remotely connected with the subject treated. See, for illustration, Byron's stanzas on the dying gladiator, or Macaulay's sketch of Westminster Hall, to which, as contemplated externally, we are thus introduced:

The place was worthy of such a trial. It was the great hall of William Rufus — the hall which had resounded with acclamations at the inauguration of thirty kings; the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers; the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party inflamed with just resentment; the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the placid courage which has half redeemed his fame.

Beginners should formally prepare a scheme of the items to be noticed. Thus, in the description of places and countries, an abstract might present some such shape as this:

Situation; extent; general appearance; peculiar features; surroundings; climate; soil and productions; population; civilization; relations to history; relations to contemporary countries; prospects; reflections.

In the description of persons, again, some of the following heads would be found helpful:

Age; form, tall or short, fleshy or lean, etc.; face, hair, eyes, nose, mouth, expression; dress; manners; peculiarities; character, with its antecedents and environment, such as parentage, nationality, religion, education; characteristic utterances; mental abilities; family and social ties; comparison with other characters; prospects.

But whether skeletons of plan be actually written out or not, it is evident that when objects of any degree of complexity are to be described, the writer or speaker must proceed according to method. No artistic result can be reached without selection and order.

These remarks on representation in language may fitly conclude with a passage from Carlyle — himself one of the foremost among men in descriptive power: ‘One grand invaluable secret there is, however, which includes all the rest, and, what is comfortable, lies clearly in every man’s power—to have an open, loving heart, and what follows from the possession of such. Truly it has been said—emphatically in these days ought it to be repeated—a loving heart is the beginning of all knowledge. This it is that opens the whole mind, quickens every faculty of the intellect to do its fit work—that of *knowing*, and, therefrom by pure consequence, of *vividly uttering forth*. Other secret of being graphic is there none worth having; but this is an all-sufficient one.’

**Narrative.**—A narrative is the exhibition of successive views, or of consecutive incidents and of objects changing from one phase to another. In this it differs from description, which represents a thing, not as becoming, growing, progressing, but fundamentally as *being*, irrespective of time, or at the time the scene is observed. The latter, for instance, exhibits Lady Macbeth in the attitude or action of an isolated moment, but the former recounts the whole story.

It is easy to see that the two processes are closely connected. Commonly they are combined. Indeed, the recital of important events, as a battle, a campaign, a voyage, colonization, must often be a series of descriptions. But description is rather the garniture of literature; and a means rather than the substance. The great



mass is narrative. Where it does not predominate, it is often employed to support an argument or to move the will, as in judicial and in pulpit eloquence; or to illustrate and enforce a lesson, as in morals, religion, fables, and parables.

When the facts narrated are external, the narrative is of the objective kind. This is the essential character of much history, epic poetry, most prose fiction, and many lyrics, as the *Charge of the Light Brigade*. It is frequent, also, in scientific writings.

When the facts narrated are internal—thoughts, feelings, desires, principles—the narrative is of the subjective kind: as when history concerns itself with the undercurrent of meaning; when biography dwells upon the character as well as the action of the subject; when the novel exhibits the workings of the mind and heart; when poetry is allegorical or introspective, as Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, and the *Psalms* of David.

The simplest form of narrative is exemplified wherever the aim is to exhibit events or circumstances in the order of their occurrence, chronologically, without any endeavor to explain or account for them; as in chronicles, annals, mere story-telling. The higher forms are distinguished by explanatory accompaniments—events are considered with distinct reference to their connecting causes, as in most modern histories. The order of time is only generally followed; logical sequence is chiefly regarded. For such productions a maturer development, a more discerning judgment, and a wider reach of intellect are required.

A too crowded canvas spoils the picture. The purpose of narrative being to exhibit an event in its rise, progress, and completion, the necessity of carefully selecting the particulars to be incorporated into it is obvious. It is the vulgar mind that forgets and spares nothing; igno-

rant that every story is subject to the law of dramatic poetry—*festinat ad eventum*, and that all which does not concur to the effect, weakens it. Mrs. Quickly's reply to Falstaff concerning his indebtedness to her, supplies a good example of this peculiarity:

*Falstaff.* What is the gross sum that I owe thee?

*Hostess.* Marry, if thou wert an honest man, thyself and thy money, too. Thou didst swear to me on a parcel gilt-goblet, sitting in my Dolphin-chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, on Wednesday in Whitsun-week, when the Prince broke thy head for likening him to a singing man of Windsor; thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my Lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not Goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in then, and call me Gossip Quickly? coming in to borrow a mess of vinegar; telling us she had a good dish of prawns; whereby thou didst desire to eat some; whereby I told thee they were ill for a green wound? And didst not thou, when she was gone down stairs, desire me to be no more so familiar with such poor people, saying, that ere long they should call me Madam? And didst thou not kiss me, and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings? I put thee now to thy book-oath, deny it if thou canst.

Seize upon some leading fact or governing conception. Discriminate the essentials. Reject what is only accessory to the object which you would keep in prominence. Thus the unity of the last chapter of Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico* is in the subject—Cortés. The principal concurrent streams, to which, in turn, all minor ones must be tributary, are given in the following divisions:

Cortés embarks for Mexico. Stops at Hispaniola. Proceedings of the Audience. Lands at Villa Rica. Reception in Mexico. Retires to his Estates. His Improvement of them. His Voyages of Discovery. He embarks for California. Disastrous Expedition. Arrival of a Viceroy. Policy of the Crown. Maritime Enterprises of Cortés. His Disgust with Mendoza. His final Return to Castile. He joins the Expedition to Algiers. His cold Reception by Charles V. Cortés' last Letter to the Emperor. Taken ill at Seville. His Will. Scruples of Conscience as to Slavery. Views entertained on this Topic. He moves to Castilleja. Death of Cortés. His

Obsequies. Fate of his Remains. Posterity of Cortés. His Character. His Knight-errantry. His Military Genius. Power over his Soldiers. Character as a Conqueror. His enlightened Views. His private Life. His Bigotry. His Manners and Habits.

All of which is comprehended under—Revisits Mexico; retires to his estates; voyages of discovery; final return to Castile; cold reception; death; character.

Make apparent the subordination of what is dependent. Let not the main point be obscured by a too extended treatment of a secondary one. The transitions should be distinctly marked. If the narrative is to have continuous movement, the scene should not be shifted more than is absolutely necessary. Needless transfers are like distracting pictures. Every drama must be constructed on a narrative skeleton called the *plot*, and the most effective thing is a *situation*—a striking scene, with an important incident, to which the previous action leads, and from which others are deduced. A story which centres, like *Robinson Crusoe*, in one principal actor or event, is far more interesting than any compendium of the world's history, in which the groundwork is changing incessantly. If the narrative is long, or if there is any considerable break of the thread, the labor of comprehending and remembering may be lightened by summaries. Such a comprehensive view may close a chapter with advantage, or open a new one. To be truthful in the real world, and probable in the imaginary; to be distinct, and to be concise—are the qualities which critics chiefly require in narrative style; each of which carries the evidence of its importance. Cowper has well said:

A tale should be judicious, clear, succinct;  
The language plain, and incidents well linked;  
Tell not as new what everybody knows,  
And, new or old, still hasten to a close.  
There centering in a focus, round and neat,  
Let all your rays of information meet.

**Exposition.**—Names and statements may be individual; as, 'Clarence,' 'The earth's surface is equal to the product of its diameter by its circumference': or general; as, 'man,' 'The surface of a sphere is equal to the product of its diameter by the circumference of a great circle.' To gather up into one view all the objects that possess organism, life, sensation, voluntary motion, and to designate the whole by a word, 'animal'; or, again, to bring together in the mind all known things that agree in the round form, and to apply to them a name collectively, 'round' or 'circle'—is to generalize a *notion*. When names or notions are bound together so as to constitute a single thought, the result is a *proposition*; as, 'Unlimited power vitiates the character.'

Amply to explain or lay open the sense or meaning of notions and propositions, is called *exposition*. To expound a notion—to render it determinate and intelligible, is to define it. The process is threefold, including the symbol, the notion itself, and its relation to other notions.

The symbol is defined, as such, by giving its origin, derivation, and composition; a history of its changes in form and use; its various current meanings, if any, from which it requires to be discriminated. Sir William Hamilton thus opens his lecture on the nature and comprehension of Philosophy:

There are two questions to be answered: 1st, What is the meaning of the *name*? and 2d, What is the meaning of the *thing*? An answer to the former question is afforded in a nominal definition of the term *philosophy*, and in a history of its employment and application. In regard to the etymological signification of the word, Philosophy is a term of Greek origin. It is a compound of *φίλος*, a *lover* or *friend*, and *σοφία*, *wisdom*—speculative wisdom. Philosophy is thus, literally, a *love of wisdom*. . . . It is probable, I think, that Socrates was the first who adopted, or at least the first who familiarized, the expression. It was natural that he should be

anxious to contradistinguish himself from the Sophists (*οἱ σοφοί*, *οἱ σοφισταί*), literally, the *wise* men; and no term could more appropriately ridicule the arrogance of these pretenders, or afford a happier contrast to their haughty designation, than that of philosopher (i.e. the *lover* of wisdom); and, at the same time, it is certain that the substantives *φιλοσοφία* and *φιλόσοφος* first appear in the writings of the Socratic school. It is true, indeed, that the verb *φιλοσοφεῖν* is found in Herodotus, in the address by Cræsus to Solon; and that, too, in a participial form, to designate the latter as a man who had traveled abroad for the purpose of acquiring knowledge. It is, therefore, not impossible that, before the time of Socrates, those who devoted themselves to the pursuit of the higher branches of knowledge were occasionally designated philosophers: but it is far more probable that Socrates and his school first appropriated the term as a distinctive appellation; and that the word *philosophy*, in consequence of this appropriation, came to be employed for the complement of all higher knowledge, and, more especially, to denote *the science conversant about the principles or causes of existence*. The term *philosophy*, I may notice, which was originally assumed in modesty, soon lost its Socratic and etymological signification, and returned to the meaning of *σοφία*, or wisdom. Quintilian calls it *nomen insolentissimum*; Seneca, *nomen invidiosum*; Epictetus counsels his scholars not to call themselves 'Philosophers'; and *proud* is one of the most ordinary epithets with which philosophy is now associated.

The etymological and historical consideration of a word often imparts great vividness to the signification. In science, especially, it is of vital importance; for an abstract term is illuminated by the concrete idea of its radical.

A notion may be further or otherwise defined, inductively — by bringing forward the particulars on which it is based; antithetically — by mentioning its contrasts; or analytically — by stating its constituents. Thus roundness may be explained by showing, or referring to, a number of bodies of that general figure — a wheel, a turnip, a hill, an apple, the sun, etc.; straight, by its opposite, bent or crooked; geometry, by its elementary conceptions, the science of position, extension, and form. The last is the

method of verbal explication; as, 'A wish is an inactive desire.' Very often it is necessary or desirable to combine two or more of these methods. Thus:

'Elasticity,' besides being scientifically defined by Analysis [as the power of bodies to recover their form after compression], is rendered easier of understanding by a series of examples of elastic bodies—a piece of India rubber, a spring, an ivory ball, a bladder of air, etc.—and by counter reference to non-elastic substance, as clay.—*Bain*.

Thus, also, modern dictionaries supplement their formal definitions pictorially. A logical definition, it may be added, comprises two things,—something more general than the notion defined and assumed to be better known, styled the *genus*; and something descriptive of the difference between the defined notion (or species) and the genus; as, 'A triangle is a polygon of three sides.' Such brevity and severity, however, are less suitable for popular apprehension than an extended unfolding or description, presenting the subject in a variety of views, or by a kind of reiterated explanation, as in Adam Smith's exposition of *remorse*.

A proposition is expounded (1) by fixing the meaning of the terms, as already indicated. Thus Martineau, discoursing from the text, 'The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,' says:

Among the deep yet neglected hints which lie beneath the surface of Scripture, there is none more searching than the distinction here assumed between the *creature* and the *son* of God. The *creature* is simply the fabric of his skill, related to him as the texture to the hand that weaves it, indebted to him for its existence, carrying in itself his purpose, but only as a *thing*—a tool—an article—in the outfit of his world. The *son* is the partaker of his essence, the repeater of his life, related to him as the child whom the parents cannot hinder from being like themselves; growing up therefore into his image, and betraying, even in exile and servitude, an irre-

pressible sympathy with his affections, and yearning towards him as the everlasting home. In man, both these characters are united. As a product of nature, born to take a place and pass away among the organisms of this earth, he is a creature no less than the cattle on a thousand hills, and God is his *Maker*. As a vehicle of something above nature, as lifted into the freedom of *personal* existence, as sharing in the life of the Eternal Spirit, he is a son of divine lineage, and God is his *Father*.

(2) By obverse iteration. As every affirmation, for instance, involves the denial of its contradictory, a principle, having been affirmed directly, may be iterated by denying the counter-proposition: 'This room is light' = 'This room is not dark'; 'All knowledge is from experience' = 'There is no intuitive knowledge.' (3) By examples. This is always, from its superior force, the leading method of expository writing. Dr. Arnott, in his *Elements of Physics*, thus exemplifies the general principle that motion is naturally as permanent as rest, the only causes of retardation, when bodies are left to themselves, being friction and the resistance of the air:

A ball rolled on level grass soon stops — if rolled on a carpet over a smooth floor, it goes longer — if on the bare floor, it goes longer still — on a smooth sheet of ice, it hardly suffers retardation from friction, and, if the air be moving with it, will reach a distant point.

. . . Two little windmill wheels set in motion together with equal velocity, but of which one has the flat sides of the vanes turned to their course, and the other the edges, if moving in the air, will stop at very different times, but if placed in a vessel from which the air has been removed, they will both revolve much longer, and will stop exactly together.

As it facilitates the motion of fishes and of ships in the water, that they have tapering forms before and behind, so does it facilitate the motion of birds in the air, that they have somewhat of similar form.

A large spinning top, with a fine hard point, set in rapid motion in a vacuum, on a hard smooth surface, will continue turning for hours.

A pendulum swinging in a vacuum has to overcome only the slight friction at its point of suspension, and, when once in motion, will vibrate for a day or more.

(4) By illustrations — associated facts, similar or analogous cases, as distinguished from particular instances. Locke, speaking of the decay of our mental acquisitions, says: 'Pictures drawn in our minds are laid in fading colors, and, unless sometimes refreshed, vanish and disappear.' The New Testament abounds in explanatory comparisons. Abstract ideas — as, notably, in the parable of the sower — are made intelligible through the medium of the senses. The following, from Theodore Parker, is a good specimen of illustrative exposition:

Have you never seen men and women whom some disaster drove to a great act of prayer, and by and by the disaster was forgot, but the sweetness of religion remained and warmed their soul? So have I seen a storm in latter spring; and all was black, save where the lightning tore the cloud with thundering rent. The winds blew and the rains fell, as though heaven had opened its windows. What a devastation there was! Not a spider's web that was out of doors escaped the storm, which tore up even the strong-branched oak. But ere long the lightning had gone by, the thunder was spent and silent, the rain was over, the western wind came up with its sweet breath, the clouds were chased away, and the retreating storm threw a scarf of rainbows over her fair shoulders and resplendent neck, and looked back and smiled, and so withdrew and passed out of sight. But for weeks long the fields held up their hands full of ambrosial flowers, and all the summer through the grass was greener, the brooks were fuller, and the trees cast a more umbrageous shade, because that storm passed by — though all the rest of earth had long ago forgot the storm, its rainbows, and its rain.

(5) By inferences, applications, and consequences. The student of Mathematics or of Physics will be at no loss to understand how greatly principles are expanded to the mind by turning them to immediate account. Let us quote from an essayist, Mr. Samuel Baily, who has been setting forth certain educational doctrines:



From these familiar facts, illustrating the irresistible tendency to personal assimilation and the durability of its effects, we may deduce the high importance of placing children with people who are easy, natural, and graceful in their deportment, who speak with correctness and purity, and are free from objectionable habits. No Dominie Sampsons should be permitted where it is possible to exclude them. The once prevalent practice of committing children to the care of the lame, the deformed, the rough, the uncouth, the ungainly, the rickety either in body or mind, is now indeed generally abandoned. It is becoming understood that an instructor is all the better for being a favorable specimen of his own race, even in physical qualities and accomplishments.

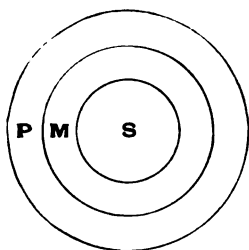
As a rule, do not confide your children to any one whose habits, manners, speech, play of countenance, and deportment, you would not like them to imitate. It is doubtless extremely difficult to act on such a rule; a compromise between welcome and unwelcome qualities, is, in general, the only practicable resource.

From what has been said, it will be seen that exposition is the style of treatment applicable to knowledge of the scientific class, including, with generalities of the highest rigor—as Mathematics, Chemistry, Logic, Natural History, Grammar—those of the looser and problematical kind—Ethics, History, Education, Politics, Theology, Criticism, subjects pertaining to life and society, in which the mode of handling is made to serve the literary ends of popular interests.

**Argument.**—Owing to the unconscious errors of opinion, the warping effect of feeling, habit, and interest, the many motives which may induce others to mislead us, we are not usually convinced of truth or falsehood by simple statement, but require an independent basis of rational belief. Human infirmity and sin compel us to demand, beyond the mere assertion that a proposition is true or false, *why* it is so. To adduce facts and principles as evidence of other facts and principles is called *argument*, in the stricter sense. Its aim is to produce conviction—assurance founded on a clear appre-

hension of the grounds or reasons of belief. In this it is primarily distinguished from exposition, which aims, first of all, to remove ignorance—to instruct.

If the reasoning is from the whole to a part—from a general truth, however established, to a particular application of it, the process is said to be *deductive*; as, All men are mortal, therefore we shall die. Of this character is the *logical syllogism*, which consists of three propositions—*major*, *minor*, and *conclusion*. From the two former, which are the premises, the latter is a necessary inference; because in them its subject and predicate, styled by logicians major and minor terms, or extremes, are distinctly compared with a middle term, or a particular common to them both. Thus:



All M is P,  
 All S is M,  
 ∴ All S is P.

But this is too stiff and tedious to be popular. In literary composition, in ordinary speech, the invariable mode is the *enthymeme*—a form of argument with one premise suppressed:

War is an evil, because it produces human misery.

Here the reasoning begins with the conclusion, and assigns the minor premise alone for its reason. The major premise is omitted, since, though it must be tacitly admitted, its formal enunciation is obviously needless.

Supplying the omission, and inverting the order, the form becomes truly syllogistic:

Whatever produces human misery is an evil:

War produces human misery;

Therefore war is an evil.

If, on the contrary, the process is from individual truths, known or admitted, the reasoning is said to be *inductive*; *formal*, in which the inference is necessitated by the laws of thought, as when we reason from all the parts discretively to the whole collectively; *real*, in which we infer that what is true of the parts examined is true of the whole. Thus, experience renders it highly probable, though not certain, that snow will fall in December. From present and past observation, that the tides have daily ebbed and flowed, we conclude that the same phenomenon will continue. From the uniformly enfeebling effect of a residence in the tropics, we infer that extreme heat is deteriorating to the human system.

The really inductive argument rests on resemblance, springs from experience, affirms more in the conclusion than is given in the premises; and hence can never be demonstrative, though allowed to have the force of moral certainty, provided the facts on which it is founded be sufficiently numerous. 'In the investigation of the laws of nature, a single experiment, fairly and carefully made, is usually allowed to be conclusive, because we can then pretty nearly ascertain all the circumstances operating: a Chemist who had ascertained, in a single specimen of gold, its capability of combining with mercury, would not think it necessary to try the same experiment with several other specimens, but would draw the conclusion concerning those metals universally, and with certainty. In human affairs, on the contrary, our uncertainty respecting many of the circumstances that may affect the result, obliges us to collect many coinciding instances to warrant

even a probable conclusion. From one instance, e.g. of the assassination of an Usurper, it would not be allowable to infer the certainty, or even the probability, of a like fate attending all Usurpers.<sup>1</sup> That form of induction, it may be well to add, in which the uniform companionship of two facts *through a great variety of circumstances* leads to their being regarded as cause and effect, is a popular favorite, and peculiarly liable to abuse. 'Many common modes of reasoning are fallacious examples of this canon. A particular mode of life is called healthy, because it has been the habit of a healthy man; a certain institution is lauded, because a nation has prospered under it. The logician in such instances would say that the conditions of a true induction have not been complied with. The easiest mode of disabusing an ordinary mind is to produce instances where the same thing has been present without the same effect.'<sup>2</sup>

It will be carefully noted that the current of thought, in deduction, is from subject to predicate; in induction, from predicate to subject. The accompanying analyses illustrate, rhetorically, the application of both methods:

THEME: KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.

(1) *Deductive*: Subject to predicate.

Knowledge: increases the pleasures of life,  
brings advantages,  
enables one the better to discharge the duties  
of life,  
prevents weariness,  
elevates the mind,  
procures the respect of others.

Therefore, Knowledge is power.

(2) *Inductive*: Predicate to subject.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Whately.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Bain.

Power consists in: health of body,  
discipline of mind,  
force of character,  
enlarged resources,  
comprehensive views,  
extended influence.<sup>1</sup>

All these, as results, may be traced to knowledge; hence, Knowledge is power.

*Theme:* The United States Government should not restrict Chinese Immigration.

(1) *Deductive:* Subject to predicate.

All men are created free and equal.

All men are entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

All have the right to engage in any labor which does not conflict with the laws of the land.

All are entitled to the results of their labor.

Competition is the life of trade.

Foreigners may eventually become citizens.

(2) *Inductive:* Predicate to subject.

America an asylum for all.

The Chinese are peaceable and law-abiding.

The Chinese are industrious and thrifty.

The Chinese are docile and tractable.

Their religion is no worse than infidelity.

They are not open violators of law.

Therefore, the United States Government should not restrict Chinese Immigration.<sup>2</sup>

Argument by *analogy* is inference from the partial similarity of things to their complete similarity. There is resemblance of property or relation, with accompanying disparity. Thus A has the attributes *l, m, n, r*; B has the attributes *l, m, n*; therefore B probably has the attribute *r*. To refute this argument it is necessary to show either that *r* is the effect of some attribute found in A but not in B; that certain circumstances are present with A, but absent from B, which are indispensable con-

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Bancroft's *Method of English Composition*.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.

ditions of  $r$ ; that B has some attribute incompatible with  $r$ ; or that the circumstances attending B prevent the existence of  $r$ . To illustrate: The earth is an opaque solid, nearly spherical, derives light and heat from the sun, and is inhabited; the moon is an opaque solid, nearly spherical, derives light and heat from the sun; hence the moon is probably inhabited. The points of difference, however—notably, that the moon has no atmosphere and no water—present a counter probability that the moon is not inhabited, or that the conditions on which life there depends are essentially different from what they are here.

Analogical argument is the more probable in proportion to the number and accuracy of the observations, and to the number and importance of the congruent attributes. It agrees with real induction in the fact that both give only probable results, and that the degree of probability may vary between impossibility and absolute certainty without ever reaching either limit. The two differ in the respect that we infer, by one, that objects agreeing in certain respects, agree in other respects; by the other, that an attribute belonging to many objects of a class, belongs to all the objects of that class.

Analogy may be usefully employed to show the reasonableness of a conclusion, to remove prejudice, to silence objections, and so to prepare the mind for the reception of knowledge. Bishop Butler applies it with great power to the subject of natural and revealed religion. The following from his chapter on the immortality of the soul is an illustration:

From our being born into the present world in the helpless, imperfect state of infancy, and having arrived from thence to mature age, we find it to be a general law of nature in our own species, that the same creatures, the same individuals, should exist in degrees of life and perception, with capacities of action, of enjoyment, and

suffering, in one period of their being, greatly different from those appointed them in another period of it. And in other creatures the same law holds. For the difference of their capacities and states of life at their birth (to go no higher) and in maturity; the change of worms into flies, and the vast enlargement of their locomotive powers by such change; and birds and insects bursting the shell, their habitation, and by this means entering into a new world, furnished with new accommodations for them; and finding a new sphere of action assigned them;—these are instances of this general law of nature. Thus, all the various and wonderful transformations of animals are to be taken into consideration here. But the states of life in which we ourselves existed formerly, in the womb and in our infancy, are almost as different from our present, in mature age, as it is possible to conceive any two states or degrees of life can be. Therefore, that we are to exist hereafter in a state as different (suppose) from our present, as this is from our former, is but according to the analogy of nature; according to a natural order or appointment, of the very same kind with what we have already experienced.

When we allege or infer that something will prove true in one case because it happened in another, as that Geology, or any other science, will on its first introduction be decried as adverse to religion because Astronomy was so decried, we are said to argue by *example*. Burke, in his speech on the East India Bill, sustains the charge of hypocrisy against that famous Company by adducing their treatment of Hastings, on the one hand, whom they reprehended with unparalleled asperity, yet continued to trust with the entire control of their affairs; and of Munson, Cleaver, and Francis, on the other, whom they ‘ruined by their praises.’ The force of example as proof rests ultimately upon the principle that like causes produce like effects, as in Patrick Henry’s famous sentence: ‘Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third—may profit by their example.’ When, on the principle that the greater includes the less, it is argued that what is true in one case is more evidently so in another in which the circumstances are

more favorable, the argument is called *a fortiori*. Examples, it is important to remember, may be argumentative, illustrative, or ornamental. They may also subserve any two of these purposes at the same time. Further, they may be real, or invented. The latter, to have weight, must have an air of fitness and probability.

When it is sought to prove the probable existence of a fact by adducing some other fact or mark that always or generally precedes, accompanies, or follows it, the process is known as argument *from sign*. The signs are not agents, but reasons. If the reasoning is from cause to effect, it is called *a priori*; if from effect to cause, *a posteriori*. From the low stage of the thermometer (and hence of the temperature) it is inferred that the river will freeze; from the prevailing high rate of interest, that there is little unemployed capital. If a dwelling, carefully secured, has been entered without violence and robbed, there probably was coöperation from within. If human blood is found on the clothes of a person suspected or accused of murder, the discovery tends to produce belief in his guilt. Proof afforded in this way is known, in courts of law, as *circumstantial evidence*, to which great value is attached.

The argument is essentially of this class when, in a trial for murder, evidence that the accused hated the murdered man, coveted his property, or was revengeful, is used to show why he may have committed the deed. It is antecedently probable that what is maintained is true, since the specified motives or influences *tend* to produce it. 'The force of the argument in this case varies with the degree of this probability, which depends, in its turn, upon the presence or absence of other antecedent probabilities—that is, of causes tending to prevent hate or covetousness from producing its natural effect. In a civilized community, such a probability, if unaccompanied by other



evidence, would be very small; for, in a civilized community, the passions and appetites are counteracted by so many other causes that they rarely produce their natural effects: but among savages such a probability would amount to a reasonable certainty.'<sup>1</sup>

On the assumption that men will say what they believe to be true rather than what they believe to be false, *testimony* is a variety of sign, implying the facts it testifies to as more or less necessary conditions of its own existence. But 'it hath been observed, that from experience we learn to confine our belief in human testimony within the proper bounds. Hence we are taught to consider many attendant circumstances, which serve either to corroborate or to invalidate its evidence. The reputation of the attester, his manner of address, the nature of the fact attested, the occasion of giving the testimony, the possible or probable design in giving it, the disposition of the hearers to whom it was given, and several other circumstances, have all considerable influence in fixing the degree of credibility.'<sup>2</sup> When the same fact is reported by a number of witnesses, where no previous concert can have taken place, the concurrence itself, independently of the character of the witnesses, may suffice for conviction and action, since, that such an agreement should be accidental, is morally impossible. Unwilling or undesigned testimony is strong, because the former is against self-love or self interest, while the latter precludes the suspicion of fabrication.

Another variety of sign is *authority*, which respects matters into which opinion most largely enters. Unable, perhaps, to investigate for ourselves, we substitute the faculties of others for our own, and accept the judgment of a competent person upon some doubtful question of

<sup>1</sup> A. S. Hill.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Campbell.

fact, doctrine, or practice, as a sufficient reason for belief in relation to such question. The opinions of legal tribunals thus become valid precedents in law. All kinds of professional advice belong to this order. While, however, such propositions as come from high sources may be presumed to be true, we should not undervalue the God-given faculties with which we are to examine and comprehend truth. 'As water,' says Bacon, 'will not ascend higher than the level of the first spring-head from whence it descendeth, so knowledge derived from Aristotle, and *exempted from liberty of examination*, will not rise again higher than the knowledge of Aristotle; and, therefore, although the position be good, *oportet discentem, credere*, yet it must be coupled with this, *oportet edoctum, judicare*, for disciples do owe unto masters only a judgment, until they be fully instructed; and not an absolute resignation or perpetual captivity; and therefore, to conclude this point, I will say no more, but so let great authors have their due, as time, which is the author of authors, be not deprived of his due, which is, further and further to discover truth.'

According to the intention or purpose of the reasoner, arguments are (1) *direct* — applied openly, seriously, immediately to the proof of a proposition; (2) *indirect* — applied either to the disproof of a premise by means of an absurd conclusion drawn from it, or to the proof of a premise by showing the falsity of its contradictory. When it is affirmed that an art or an institution should be abolished because liable to great abuse, the answer is that the objection lies equally against the best things in the world, none of which, therefore, is worthy of cultivation — an absurdity. When the given proposition and its contradictory are considered — as, man is a free agent, man is not a free agent — the latter is assumed to be true, and is then shown to involve some false principle, or to lead to

consequences manifestly false; hence the assumed proposition is false, and the given proposition is true, for of two contradictories one must be, and only one can be, true. This is the famous *Reductio ad Absurdum*, so familiar to students of Euclidian geometry.

It is obvious that the first requisite in a discussion is to have a clear understanding of the point to be argued. Without such distinctness of view as the focus or pole-star of discourse, composition will become perplexed, obscure, and loose. The artificial means of furthering this object are furnished by the arts of exposition: the leading terms should be accurately defined, and understood in the same sense; the question should be expressed in definite and perspicuous language, with all necessary limitations and qualifications, by the exclusion of irrelevant or undisputed points, by enumeration of the various antagonistic opinions, by obverse iteration and example. Many questions are controverted only because the parties see them in different aspects. Explication of meaning is often the effectual method of deciding the controversy.

To a debater it is often of great importance to determine at the outset on which side the presumption lies, and to which the burden of proof—*onus probandi*—belongs. The first, for example, is in favor of the accused, who is not required to prove his innocence; while the second rests on the accuser, who must substantiate his charge of guilt. Should an advocate volunteer a defence of his witness's character before it had been questioned, the very attempt would raise suspicion that the character needed bolstering. If a slandered person, instead of replying by a simple denial and a defiance of proof, were to undertake his own vindication, the result would be, in many cases, that the evidence collected might even have the effect of exciting distrust. Herein consists the great advantage that the side on which the

presumption lies has over the opposite — that it must be held to triumph until a decisive case has been made out against it. Not to be vanquished is to vanquish. ‘A body of troops may be perfectly adequate to the defence of a fortress against any attack that may be made on it; which yet, if, ignorant of the advantage they possess, they sally forth into the open field to encounter the enemy, may suffer a repulse. At any rate, even if strong enough to act on the offensive, they ought still to keep possession of their fortress. In like manner, if you have the *Presumption* on your side, and can but *refute* all the arguments brought against you, you have, for the present at least, gained a victory: but if you abandon this position, by suffering this *Presumption* to be forgotten, which is in fact *leaving out one of, perhaps, your strongest arguments*, you may appear to be making a feeble attack, instead of a triumphant defence.’<sup>1</sup>

There is a presumption in favor of the defendant, in favor of prevailing beliefs, and established forms, political, social, religious: that is, the burden of proof is thrown upon the complainant, assailant, or innovator — upon any one proposing to infringe upon the rights of man, to inflict penalties, to expel an actual possessor, to alter or destroy an existing institution, to impeach a long-sanctioned opinion, to propagate a new faith. The ultimate general principle on which the particular maxims of presumption rest seems to be this: that, in the absence of any absolute criterion of truth, whatever *is* should, without sufficient reason against it, be regarded as true, right, or expedient, though the probability of its being such may leave room for doubt.

The survey of arguments for and against the proposition to be maintained, should be as wide and thorough as possible. Among those which occur, select such as are

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Whately.

not only applicable but convincing. Take into account the nature of the matter to be proved, whether one of fact or of theory. If you aim to persuade, consider the condition of those addressed, whether they are cultivated or ignorant, candid or prejudiced. Comparisons and examples, though less accurate, are more efficacious than formal deductions, because they quicken rather than tax thought. Remember that a stronger effect is produced by the thorough treatment of a few arguments than by their multiplication. To extend them too far serves rather to render a cause suspected than to give it weight. 'Every speaker should place himself in the situation of a hearer, and think how he would be affected by those reasons which he purposes to employ for persuading others. For he must not expect to impose on mankind by mere arts of speech. They are not so easily imposed on as public speakers are sometimes apt to think. Shrewdness and sagacity are found among all ranks; and the speaker may be praised for his fine discourse, while yet the hearers are not persuaded of the truth of any one thing he has uttered.'<sup>1</sup>

As to arrangement, while the writer or speaker should himself have a clear conception of the thing to be proved before undertaking to argue in its support, its distinct statement at the outset may or may not be advisable. In the natural and logical order, the proposition is announced, or the question is stated and the answer is given, then the arguments follow, proceeding from the less to the greater. But when the topic is unpalatable or liable to be misunderstood, it is well to begin with such premises as will gain a ready assent, and thus lead up, by gradual approach, to the conclusion. Arguments obtained from the thesis by the exposition of its essential notions, should come first, since they establish the possibility or probability of

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Blair.

what is asserted. The anticipation of its truth, awakened by this method, may then be confirmed by the attendant circumstances, by testimony, by analogy, and example. The stress is to be put upon those considerations which first invite and then occupy the mind. In general, a strong argument should be used first, the very strongest perhaps last, and the weaker ones be introduced in the middle.

In refutation, the reverse order is often adopted — the opponent's main argument is first replied to, 'lest,' as Quintilian says, 'if this is in the mind of the hearers they may think it unanswerable until it is answered'; after which the minor ones are disposed of with greater ease and with a growth of impression. It will be of advantage to set forth explicitly, at the commencement, all that he has admitted, with any valuable inferences fairly deducible therefrom. If he has mixed and blended his arguments, they should be disentangled and answered separately.

It may not be amiss to add that he who seeks the truth will treat an adversary with candor and fairness, not with irritable acrimony or assumed contempt.

The conclusion may aptly be a brief summing up of the main points; an emphasis of some head, or of the status itself; or an exhortation. 'There are at this point two opposed errors, almost equally fatal; which men fall into according to their several characteristics — a direct appeal without that presentation of truth which gives it propriety and power; a discussion of principles without that enforcement which gives them value. It is only when the body of thought is animated by fitting emotion, that we have a living product; only when the will is reached through the intellect as well as the heart, that man achieves progress.'<sup>1</sup> You remember, finally, that in discussing the methods of composition it was urged that you be heartily occupied with your thought and sincere in your expression; that

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bascom.

your manner should be confluent with the matter, varying its pitch and tone according to the subject treated; that, whatever be the subject, its bearings must be fixed and always visible; that words, sentences, and paragraphs should be linked closely, symmetrically, attractively together in progressive movement toward a clearly apprehended goal. It was observed that Rhetoric considers also the audience—readers and hearers; that the essential qualities of style—perspicuity, energy, elegance—will stand in different relations to each other and exist in different degrees, according to the general and the special character of the occasion and the effect to be produced—to enlighten or convince the understanding, to please the imagination or to influence the will: that is, to elucidate what is not known or not distinctly perceived; to induce a new belief or judgment or to modify one already existing; to gratify the sense of the beautiful, the sublime, the marvellous, the ridiculous; or to incline the will to such or such an act. These several ends, which embrace in varying prominence the several expressional forms of which this chapter treats, are, though separable in theory, usually conjoined in practice, each retaining, however, its characteristic feature in the same discourse. One of them, it is true, must in every case be principal, the others being introduced only in subserviency to the main design. Without some gratification the attention must inevitably flag. Without sentiments or ideas no writer or speaker can be permanently impressive. Without the assistance of reason and imagination, conduct cannot be soundly determined.

The argumentative and the emotional everywhere sustain each other. In political controversy, as everybody knows, the effort to convince or persuade is potently associated with entertainment in the shape of ridicule and caricature; but even here the most *effective* orators are

not those who make the people laugh. The humorist must be serious. The scientist must be attractive — must occupy himself with form. The preacher, who hopes to produce a certain disposition of soul, must be teacher as well as exhorter.

## EXERCISES.

1. In a controversy touching the Divine origin of Christianity, on which side does the burden of proof rest?
2. What is the descriptive method of Anatomy?
3. Characterize the following passage:

A point that show'd the valley, stretched  
At length before us; and, not distant far,  
Upon a rising ground a gray church-tower,  
Whose battlements were screened by tufted trees.  
And towards a crystal mere, that lay beyond  
Among steep hills and woods embosomed, flowed  
A copious stream with boldly-winding course;  
Here traceable, there hidden — there again  
To sight restored, and glittering in the sun.  
On the stream's bank, and everywhere, appeared  
Fair dwellings, single, or in social knots;  
Some scattered o'er the level, others perched  
On the hill sides, a cheerful quiet scene,  
Now in its morning purity arrayed.— *Wordsworth.*

4. And this:

Having now, Mr. Speaker, gone through the various depositions that have been made before you—having from the evidence shown that the alleged grounds of the high-bailiff's motives were the direct reverse of those he declares to this House to have been his motives—having shown that he was in habits of clandestine intercourse with my opponents—having shown that he was in the constant course of receiving *ex parte* information in an illicit and shameful secrecy—having shown that he positively and solemnly denied the series of iniquitous proceedings in the vestry which he boldly avows at your bar—having shown that the poll was as much a scrutiny as any poll can possibly be—having explained my views in the event of any demand of a scrutiny—having described the species of intimidation used to this man, and confirmed that, so far from exculpating, it



tends greatly to criminate him — having shown this, sir, and shown it by the evidence which you have heard at your bar, I shall conclude this part of my evidence with submitting to every man of honor and candor who hears me, whether he really thinks that the high-bailiff of Westminster exercised a sound and honest discretion in granting a scrutiny, supposing for argument's sake that he actually possessed the power to grant it.—*Fox*.

5. Are the following descriptive, narrative, expository or argumentative?

(1) I deny not but that it is of the greatest concernment in the church and commonwealth, to have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors; for books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them, to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve, as in a phial, the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragons' teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book. Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. It is true no age can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse. We should be wary, therefore, what persecution we raise against the living labors of public men, how we spill that seasoned life of man, preserved and stored up in books; since we see a kind of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a kind of martyrdom; and if it extend to the whole impression, a kind of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elemental life, but strikes at the ethereal and soft essence, the breath of reason itself; slays an immortality rather than a life.—*Milton*.

(2) There is no thing produced, no event happening, in the known universe which is not connected by a uniformity or inevitable sequence with some one or more of the phenomena which preceded it. These antecedent phenomena, again, were connected in a

similar manner with some that preceded them, and so on. All the phenomena of nature, then, are the necessary, or in other words, the unconditional, consequences of some former collocation of causes. The state of the whole universe, at any instant, is the consequence of its state at the previous instant. If one knew all the agents which exist at the present moment, and the laws of their agency, he might predict the whole future history of the universe.—*J. S. Mill.*<sup>1</sup>

6. Which of the four forms of expression are combined in the following, and which predominates?

The type-species of every genus, the type-genus of every family, is, then, one which possesses all the characters and properties of the genus in a marked and prominent manner. The type of the Rose family has alternate stipulate leaves, wants the albumen, has the ovules not erect, has the stigmata simple, and besides these features, which distinguish it from the exceptions or varieties in its class, it has the features which make it prominent in its class. It is one of those which possess clearly several leading attributes; and thus, though we cannot say of any one genus that it *must* be the type of the family, or of any one species that it *must* be the type of the genus, we are still not wholly to seek: the type must be connected by many affinities with most of the others of its group; it must be near the centre of the crowd, and not one of the stragglers.—*Whewell.*

7. The same of this:

Glass is a transparent, impermeable, and brittle substance. Its essential ingredients are silica and potash, to which various other substances are occasionally added; one of the most common and important of which is oxide of lead, by which the fusibility and density of the glass is increased, so that it is more easily worked and more brilliant, especially when ornamented by cutting. There are several kinds of glass, differing in their composition, and employed for different purposes. *Flint-glass* is used for decanters, drinking-glasses, chandeliers, and other ornamented furniture: it is composed of the three substances already named. *Crown-glass*, which is used for windows, is compounded of silica and soda, with a portion of lime. *Green bottle-glass* is made of a mixture of sand with impure wood-ashes, kelp, and a portion of brick clay. These kinds of glass are manufactured by fusing their elements in a furnace, and then

<sup>1</sup> Logic.

subjecting them to the operation of *blowing*. *Plate-glass*, the finest of all kinds, and the most difficult to make, is used in certain philosophical instruments, and also for mirrors and windows. It is composed of fine sand, soda, lime, black oxide of manganese, cobalt blue, and fragments of good glass. These materials, when in a state of perfect fusion, are poured out on a hot copper plate; and the mass is then rolled out, annealed, and polished by grinding.

Glass is supposed to have been invented among the Phœnicians. The discovery of pieces of glass in the ruins of Thebes, shows that it was known to the Egyptians. It seems to have been applied by them almost exclusively to articles of ornament and luxury. But now it has become an article of general utility, and its manufacture is one of the highest interest. If we consider the worthlessness of the original materials from which it is made, the ingenuity exhibited in the process of making it, the beauty of the forms into which it is ultimately molded, and the variety of most useful and necessary purposes which it serves, it is not too much to say that the manufacture is one of the most important in the history of inventions. Not two centuries have elapsed since glass superseded the nondescript and unsatisfactory provisions formerly used for windows; but so evident has been its utility, that the meanest cottage is now supplied with it in various forms. The houses of the rich and the poor alike are now constructed with greater attention to light, cheerfulness, and beauty, from the supply of glass being so abundant and cheap. And there can be no question that the tastes and habits of both classes alike have been improved by the liberal use of this admirable product of industrial skill.—*Chambers's Encyclopedia*.

8. Discuss the following arguments:

(1) Under Chatham, the British nation rose suddenly to prosperity; therefore he was the cause of the improvement.

(2) States, in respect to vital constitution, are like individuals—they pass through the successive stages of infancy, youth, maturity, old age, and death.

(3) The sun and planets gravitate; therefore the stars gravitate.

(4) Designing persons are untrustworthy;

Everybody forms designs;

∴ Nobody can be trusted.

(5) Whatever represses the liberty of mankind ought to be resisted;

Among those things that do so, there are governments;  
 . . . Governments ought to be resisted.

- (6) If the wife you espouse be beautiful, she excites jealousy;  
 If she be ugly, she disgusts;  
 Therefore it is best not to marry.—*Bias*.

9. The following lines were addressed to the American people in time of despondency. Classify the argument:

Great Britain, at the expense of three millions of pounds, has killed a hundred and fifty Yankees this campaign, which is twenty thousand pounds a head; and at Bunker Hill she gained a mile of ground, half of which she lost again by our taking post on Plowed Hill. During the same time sixty thousand children have been born in America. From these data may easily be calculated the time and expense necessary to kill us all, and conquer the whole territory.

10. Give the topical outline of the history of creation as presented in *Genesis*.

11. Write out in order the leading incidents in the life of Cæsar, Pitt, and Napoleon.

12. Describe:

- (1) The British Parliament.
- (2) The Government of the United States.
- (3) Mount Etna.
- (4) The Yosemite Valley.

13. Reduce to the syllogistic form:

- (1) Why boast we, Glaucus, our extended reign,  
 Where Xanthus' streams enrich the Lycian plain,  
 Our numerous herds, that range the fruitful field,  
 And hills, where vines their purple harvest yield,  
 Our foaming bowls with purer nectar crown'd,  
 Our feasts enhanc'd with music's sprightly sound;  
 Why on those shores are we with joy survey'd,  
 Admir'd as heroes, and as gods obey'd,  
 Unless great acts superior merit prove,  
 And vindicate the bounteous powers above?  
 'Tis ours the dignity they give to grace;  
 The first in valor, as the first in place.—*Homer*.

- (2) If there's a power above us,  
 And that there is all nature cries aloud

In all her works, he must delight in virtue;  
And that, which he delights in, must be happy.—*Addison*.

(3) Man is either a free or a necessitated agent. If the latter, he cannot, of himself, decide between conflicting motives, and is irresponsible. But these conclusions are contradicted by consciousness. Therefore he is free.

14. Discuss: Ought capital punishment to be abolished?

See *Nation*, Vol. VIII, p. 166, Vol. XVI, p. 213; *North American Review*, Vol. LXII, p. 40, Vol. CXVI, p. 138, Vol. CXXXIII, p. 534; *Foreign Quarterly Review*, Vol. XXIV, p. 394; *Blackwood's Magazine*, Vol. XXVII, p. 865; *Westminster Review*, Vol. XVII, p. 52, Vol. XCI, p. 429; *Carson's Capital Punishment is Murder Legalized*; *Montagu's On the Punishment of Death*; *Cheever's Punishment by Death*; *Cox's Principles of Punishment*, pp. 1-14, 77 *seq.*; *S. G. Goodrich's Young American*, pp. 234, 235; *Fortnightly Review*, Vol. XL, p. 581.

15. Discuss: Is America ready for the adoption of free-trade principles?

See *Thompson's Political Economy*, pp. 351-360; *Fawcett's Free Trade and Protection*, pp. 48-73; *Cairnes' Political Economy*, pp. 375 *seq.*; *Young's Introduction to the Science of Government*, pp. 277 *seq.*; *Bowen's American Political Economy*, pp. 480 *seq.*; *Sullivan's Protection to Native Industry*; *North American Review*, Vol. XL, p. 122, Vol. XCV, p. 463, Vol. CXXVIII, p. 695; *Atlantic*, Vol. XXXVI, p. 298; *Nation*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 161; *Fraser's Magazine*, Vol. CCXXII, p. 604; *Blackwood's Magazine*, Vol. CCXXII, p. 447; *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. XC, p. 133.

16. Discuss: Are labor-strikes, on the whole, beneficial and justifiable?

See *Bowen's American Political Economy*, p. 110; *Brassey's On Work and Wages*, p. 1; *North American Review*, January, 1885; *William Trant's Trade Unions*; *Nation*, Vol. XXXVII, p. 70; *International Review*, Vol. XIV, p. 353; *Fraser's Magazine*, Vol. C, p. 767; *Westminster Review*, Vol. LXXIV, p. 1; *British Quarterly*, Vol. LVIII, p. 336; *Living Age*, Vol. XXXIX, p. 227; *Blackwood's Magazine*, Vol. CL, p. 718; *Henry George's Social Problems*, p. 178; *Henry George's Progress and Poverty*, p. 281; *F. B. Hawley's Capital and Population*, p. 130; *Joseph's Cook's Labor*, p. 286; *William Boscher's Principles of Political Economy*, Vol. I, p. 176, Vol. II, p. 84.

## CHAPTER XI.

### ÆSTHETICS OF EXPRESSION — IMAGINATION.

Imagination is the air of mind.—BAILLEY.

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,  
And, as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.—SHAKESPEARE.

IN a book of topography or a tourist's journal, we might read, 'See yon row of pines at twilight eve, how, shorn and bowed, they bend before the sea-blast.' Now observe the magical effect of union with the spiritual, or rather of refraction through it:

Yon row of bleak and visionary pines,  
By twilight glimpse discerned, mark! how they flee  
From the fierce sea-blast, all their tresses wild  
Streaming before them.—*Shakespeare.*

So the landscape painter, omitting the details, gives us only the spirit and splendor. Prose reality values Nature as substance; poetic, as symbol. Note, in the following stanza on the death of Keats, the vitalizing and exalting power of mind, when, penetrated with its sentiment, it projects it outward, as if heaven and earth were but the painted vicissitudes of soul:

Morning sought  
Her eastern watch-tower, and, her hair unbound,  
Wet with the tears that should adorn the ground,  
Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day;  
Afair the melancholy thunder moaned,  
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,  
And the wild winds flew 'round, sobbing in their dismay.

—*Shelley.*

Keats, contemplating the figures sculptured upon a Grecian urn, sees a marble youth in pursuit of a marble maid, and finds in that suspended scene a type or picture of his own teased aspiration—finds consolation, too, in the thought that, though the youth can never succeed in his chase, he can never fall any farther behind in it. What finer instance of moulding and interpretative energy?

Fair youth beneath the trees, thou canst not leave  
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;  
Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal! Yet do not grieve:  
She cannot fade though thou hast not thy bliss,  
Forever wilt thou love and she be fair.

That faculty which thus perceives the symbolic character of things; which transfuses the inanimate with an intelligent presence and depicts it in living movement; or collects and fuses objects and facts, and weaves over them a vascular web of emotional relationship, aiming at a new and fairer whole, because speaking after the ideal and not after the apparent—is the *Imagination*.

The word means an *imaging*, or a marking of likenesses. The power itself gives form to thought—not necessarily uttered form, but form capable of being uttered in shape or in sound, or in any mode upon which the senses can lay hold. Because it resembles most the prime operation of the power of God, it has been called the *creative* faculty, and its exercise *creation*.

Its function is to replace in thought, former perceptions and sensations, to combine them, not according to the original and actual, but rather according to the mind's own desire and standard; so that while the groundwork of the representation is something which has been, at some time, an object of perception, the picture itself, as it stands before the mind in its completeness, is not a copy of anything actually perceived, but a creation of the

mind's own. Time, place, and circumstance fall out, or are varied at will; the scene is laid when and where we like; the incidents follow each other no longer in their actual order, but are conformed to the pleasure of the artist. Thus Shelley, taking the sky, the abstraction of death, and the inventions of his fellow-men in glass, in color, in dome, and putting them together according to the harmony of truths embodied in each, presents us this figure of the destroyer that, walking aloft, treads out this life-bubble of colors:

The one remains; the many change and pass;  
 Heaven's light forever shines; earth's shadows fly;  
 Life like a dome of many colored glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of eternity,  
 Until death tramples it to fragments.

Here is a new thought-form, though none of the material that goes to make it has been originated. Generally speaking, the imagination takes forms already existing, and gathers them about a thought so much higher than they, that it can group and subordinate and harmonize them into a whole which shall unveil or render visible that thought.

Of imagination as the faculty of recombining or constructing anew the materials which experience and observation furnish for it to work with or upon, there are several varieties. When it combines to classify and generalize, to invent, to discover, or to instruct, it is *scientific*. When it deals ideally and suggestively with the higher objects of nature and spirit, exciting the nobler feelings and calling into action the nobler capacities of man, it is *poetic*, or *artistic*, by eminence. In the former case, the result is a formula, whose paramount purpose is to be as brief and comprehensive as possible; as, 'Evolution is a process from the uniform and indefinite to the multiform and definite.' In the latter, the result is a form



of forms, whose controlling aim is, rather, to be as *beautiful* as possible; as Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. Both may engage themselves on the same set of facts. The novel is thus a joint product of science and art. 'The great modern novelist is at once scientific and poetic: and here it seems to me, in the novel, we have the meeting, the reconciliation, the kiss, of science and poetry. For example, George Eliot, having with those keen eyes of hers collected and analyzed and sorted many facts of British life, binds them together into a true poetic synthesis, in, for instance, *Daniel Deronda*, when instead of giving us the ultimate relations of all her facts in the shape of a formula, like that of evolution, she gives them to us in the beautiful creation of Gwendolen Harleth and all the other striking forms which move through the book as embodiments in flesh and blood of the scientific relations between all her facts.'<sup>1</sup>

When the ends are for mere pleasure, and the associations, as well as the emotions excited, are not especially ennobling, the poetic activity becomes *fancy*. Fancy is an exertion upon a smaller scale of the same faculty of which imagination is the higher element. Fancy is superficial, joins by accidental resemblance, and amuses us. Imagination is central, uses an organic classification, and expands us. Though both can be grave and gay, the more natural sphere of the one is comedy; of the other, tragedy.

When the action of reason is nearly suspended, or permanently set aside, as in reverie, dreaming, somnambulism, and insanity, we have *phantasy*, whose effects or products, severed from all relations of place, time, or previous cognition, are simply grotesque, or, as we say, *fantastic*.

When, again, we form for our pursuit an ideal of man-

<sup>1</sup> Sidney Lanier.

hood or womanhood, when we imagine what we are to be and to become in fortune and success, thus including more or less distinctly what we ought to be in character and in performance, the imagination is, in this relation, *ethical*.

Think, now, of the importance, the benefits, the influence, of this faculty. The vividness and force of composition depend largely upon its skilful use. The orator requires it. His chief resources are illustration and resemblance. Without it, the painter and the sculptor would have no enlarged sense, no suggestiveness, to exhibit in color and in stone. As for the poet, according to his measure of it is he higher or lower:

‘It may be taken for an axiom, that where we get great creative power, many-sidedness, and a conjunction of grand conceptions with the emotional sublime, there we have first-class poetry, and where any of these qualities are wanting, first-class poetry is not. It may also be as readily granted, that the class of poetry next in order is where there is a lack of creative power, but frequent instances of either of the two sources of the sublime combined with a prominent manifestation of the representative faculty. From this level the next step in the descent to the third or æsthetic order, is the rarity of any instance of the sublime, with great vigour of description, in which the spiritual dominates over the material. The lowest step of all lands us on that ground where we get inferior combinations of the imaginative and representative elements in second-rate descriptive poetry, and where flights of fancy and sallies of wit are substituted for sublime bursts of passion, and the spiritual manifestations of beauty. This is not the sphere of ethereal types, but of material embodiments. Beyond the frontier of this sensuous region, we come in contact with the dreary wastes of the actual, in which most common-place characters are content to spin out the great bulk of their lives.’<sup>1</sup>

Have we not seen that half of our language is its work, losing its poetic aspect by commonness of use? ‘Think-est thou,’ says Carlyle, ‘there were no poets till Dan

<sup>1</sup> J. Devey: *Comparative Estimate of Modern English Poets*.

Chaucer? No heart burning with a thought which it could not hold, and had no word for; and needed to shape and coin a word for—what thou callest a metaphor, trope, or the like? For every word we have, there was such a man and poet. The coldest word was once a glowing new metaphor, and bold, questionable originality. The very *attention*, does it not mean an *attentio*, a *stretching-to*? Fancy that act of the mind, which all were conscious of, which none had yet named—when this new poet first felt bound and driven to name it. His questionable originality and new glowing metaphor was found adoptable, intelligible, and remains our name for it to this day.'

It is of inestimable value to us all. The poet, the orator, the artist, can convey to us no fuller, deeper meaning than we have soul to receive. The same heavens are over the astronomer and his dog. The president and the pig look upon the many-colored morning and evening. But what a different world it is to dog and astronomer, pig and president! Science pulls the snow-drop to shreds, but whence comes its idea of suffering hope and pale confident submission? One person, viewing Niagara Falls, thinks it a good place for sponging cloth. Why does another cry out, 'God of grandeur, what magnificence!' Beyond the body's needs of bread, clothing, lodging, and medicine, who sees that earth and sky are starred with loveliness, and, withal, reads the lesson thereof?

Least of all are the practical uses of the imagination to be overlooked. It lifts us above ourselves, creates for us standards of attainment to which we may aspire, and without the vision of which none can rise. It looks from the actual to the desirable and possible, conceiving that which is more perfect than the human eye hath seen or the human hand hath wrought. The ideal is the bow of promise which we shall never reach, but without which we

should not be what we are. The beasts have their paradise around them—man's is ever before him, moving forward as he moves.

Whatever our ideals are, false or true, elevated or low, they are sure to exert a most healthful or a most baneful influence upon satisfaction and success. It is much less what we are and possess than what we imagine that we ought to be and to have, that is decisive of happiness and misery.

All that can be said, then, tends to enforce the culture and discipline of the imagination—imagination as distinguished from that seductive and enervating state known as reverie or castle-building. This culture is needed primarily to counteract the proneness to materialism and earthiness. It is needed to enable us to see the great power, beauty, and wisdom of things; to subordinate the means of living to the ends of life, to beget in us a noble unrest, an ever-renewed awaking from the dead, a ceaseless questioning of the past for the interpretation of the future, an urging on of the motions of life. The very existence of the imagination is proof that it may be improved to our good, or neglected and abused to our harm. Of direct means, the whole is comprised in two words—food and exercise. Seek true visions, dream noble dreams. Goethe advises us to have constantly before our eyes, that is, in the room we most frequent, some work of the best attainable art. Cultivate fellowship with nature, and in literature surround yourselves with the genial presence of the high-minded.

## CHAPTER XII.

### ÆSTHETICS OF EXPRESSION—TASTE.

Taste, like Imagination, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a *passive* sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence *not* passive—to intellectual *acts* and *operations*.—WORDSWORTH.

WHEN in the sphere of sense certain objects are brought in contact with the appropriate physical organ, there is first an affection of the sensibility, a mere feeling, of which we are cognizant; then a judgment that the object so affecting us possesses such and such qualities—is sweet, sour, bitter, etc. In other words, we say that the thing *tastes* so and so. When, again, we regard a splendid sunset or a noble statue, we are conscious of an emotion—an emotion of pleasure and delight; then find ourselves exclaiming mentally or aloud, ‘How beautiful!’ or ‘How grand!’ We may presently observe with careful eye the details, and the relation of the several parts to the whole, seeking to know what it is in the one or the other that pleases us; and we are gratified the more or the less, in proportion as we ascertain its merits or defects.

Between the two cases there is some analogy, sufficient to suggest a transfer of name from the former to the latter; and hence, in many languages, the power of perceiving the beautiful and sublime in nature, art, and literature, is called *Taste*. High sensibility, lovingness, which is an attribute of all noble minds, is, indeed, the foundation, the spring, the life. There is neither motive

nor opportunity for the exercise of perceptive power, if pleasure be wanting. Hence Burke's definition of taste—'That faculty or those faculties of the mind which *are affected with*, or which *form a judgment of*, the works of imagination and the elegant arts'; and Alison's—'That faculty of the mind by which we *perceive* and *enjoy* whatever is beautiful or sublime in the works of nature and art.' Philosophically, however, the word denotes the intellectual rather than the emotional element of the process. The two are closely related, yet clearly distinguishable. The latter is passive—is the capability of being moved; the former is active—is the capability of judging as to the beauty or deformity, merit or demerit, of a thing—of discerning the fitness of particular causes to produce in us particular effects. The one is more native; the other, more acquired. The peasant and the savage have lively sensibility, but little or no discrimination. The accomplished musician has most critical knowledge, but the listening and wondering child, who judges scarcely or not at all, may feel most. Of taste, therefore, in the metaphorical meaning, it has been said with much justness: 'The essential element which constitutes it, pertains to the reason; it is, in truth, only one of the forms of this sovereign power, which takes different names according to the objects which it deals with—*reason*, properly speaking, when it employs itself in the sphere of speculative truth; *conscience*, when it reveals to us truths moral and practical; *taste*, when it appreciates the beauty and suitableness of objects in the real world, or of works of art.'<sup>1</sup>

Nor is taste to be confounded with imagination. The first may be essentially defective where the second exists in a high degree, as happens always with children and barbarians, and not infrequently with the productions of

<sup>1</sup> Benard.

the poet, the painter, the orator. The second is producer, creator; the first is lawgiver, director. The distinction is much the same as between talent and genius. One is executive power, power of criticism, power of conscious reflection, power to adapt means to ends. The other is superior power of instinct, spontaneous intuition, power to originate new forms out of old matter. Both are royal guests, not often lodged in the same body.

Taste, like every other faculty of the mind, depends on circumstances for the degree of its development, and the mode of its action. What one age or individual approves another will condemn. The Indian rejoices in the disfigurement of his body by tattooing, paint, and feathers. The Asiatics preferred in poetry and eloquence the tumid, the ornamental, the gaudy; the Greeks admired the chaste and simple. Rome thought the architectural style of Athens too tame, and in all her public buildings sought to dazzle by luxurious decoration. The Middle Age loved the dark and massive, and reviving Europe gave her favor to the imposing and bewildering Gothic. The metaphysical quibbling of the Dark Age had its day of popularity. The Elizabethan Euphuists, now fallen into neglect, enjoyed unbounded applause. During the Restoration, an affected brilliancy of wit was the fashion in vogue. We speak not of the diversity among contemporaneous nations, nor of that which is matter of daily and familiar observation with each. Birth, previous training, habits of thought, are modifying influences. You have all heard of the mathematician that could never find anything sublime in *Paradise Lost*, but 'could never read the queries at the end of Newton's *Optics* without feeling his hair stand on end and his blood run cold.'

Civilization moves forward. The ideals of yesterday are shown to be false by the ideals of to-morrow, which are only relatively true. The finalities of the past yield

to the larger generalizations of the present, and each denotes the height of the human soul in its hour. Otherwise expressed, taste is variant but progressive, as are other forms of mental activity — conscience, for instance. Its decisions are not all equally correct, and where they are conflictive, those must be esteemed just and true that coincide with the concurrent voice of the majority of the educated, reflective, and practiced. But have we, then, it will be said, no other criterion of what is beautiful, than the approbation of the majority? Must we collect the voices of others, before we form any judgment for ourselves, of what deserves applause in eloquence or poetry? By no means; there are principles of reason and sound judgment which can be applied to matters of taste, as well as to the subjects of science and philosophy. He who admires or censures any work of genius, is always ready, if his taste be in any degree improved, to assign some reasons for his decision. He appeals to principles, and points out the grounds on which he proceeds. Taste is a sort of compound power, in which the light of the understanding always mingles, more or less, with the feelings of sentiment.<sup>1</sup>

That we are bound to like one thing rather than another, is granted generally by men's speaking of bad or good taste, though frequently denied, when we pass to particulars, by the assertion of each that he has a right to his opinion. Good taste conforms to the authority of judges who stand for that ultimate approximation or unity of preferences to which changes of opinion arrive in consequence of experience. Bad taste violates the rules and principles by which sensitive and well informed minds are guided in such matters. 'Our purity of taste,' says Ruskin, 'is best tested by its universality, for if we can only admire this thing or that, we may be sure that

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Blair.



our cause for liking is of a finite and false nature. But if we can perceive beauty in everything of God's doing, we may argue that we have reached the true perception of its universal laws. Hence, false taste may be known by its fastidiousness, by its demands of pomp, splendor, and unusual combination, by its enjoyment only of particular styles and modes of things, and by its pride, also, for it is forever meddling, mending, accumulating, and self-exulting.'

Taste, it is needless to say, both admits and requires cultivation, emotionally and intellectually. Hardness of heart darkens the understanding. Emotion ceases to be felt, if disregarded; is strengthened, if cherished. Too much is misleading, want of it is vulgarity. Perception is quickened by love, judgment is tempered by veneration; both are more swiftly and effectively used when the energy and passion of a moral nature are behind them. Critical writings, works of nature, models of excellence—the approved productions in literature and art—must become familiar by close observation and careful study. It were to be desired, of course, that the foundation should be laid in a broad and ample culture of the whole mind; and, underlying all special efforts after improvement in this direction, should be the maxim that expression is more than form. The following utterances of the great art-critic of the age are commended to your thoughtful consideration:

Wherever the word 'taste' is used with respect to matters of art, it indicates either that the thing spoken of belongs to some inferior class of objects, or that the person speaking has a false conception of its nature. For, consider the exact sense in which a work of art is said to be 'in good or bad taste.' It does not mean that it is true, or false; that it is beautiful or ugly; but that it does or does not comply either with the laws of choice, which are enforced by certain modes of life; or the habits of mind produced by a particular sort of education. It does not mean merely fashionable, that is,

complying with a momentary caprice of the upper classes; but it means agreeing with the habitual sense which the most refined education, common to those upper classes at the period, gives to their whole mind. Now, therefore, so far as that education does indeed tend to make the senses delicate, and the perceptions accurate, and thus enables people to be pleased with quiet instead of gaudy color, and with graceful instead of coarse form; and, by long acquaintance with the best things, to discern quickly what is fine from what is common;—so far, acquired taste is an honorable faculty, and it is true praise of anything to say it is ‘in good taste.’ But so far as this higher education has a tendency to narrow the sympathies and harden the heart, diminishing the interest of all beautiful things by familiarity, until even what is best can hardly please, and what is brightest hardly entertain;—so far as it fosters pride, and leads men to found the pleasure they take in anything, not on the worthiness of the thing, but on the degree in which it indicates some greatness of their own (as people build marble porticoes, and inlay marble floors, not so much because they like the colors of marble, or find it pleasant to the foot, as because such porches and floors are costly, and separated in all human eyes from plain entrances of stone and timber);—so far as it leads people to prefer gracefulness of dress, manner, and aspect, to value of substance and heart, liking a well *said* thing better than a true thing, and a well trained manner better than a sincere one, and a delicately formed face better than a good-natured one, and in all other ways and things setting custom and semblance above everlasting truth;—so far, finally, as it induces a sense of inherent distinction between class and class, and causes everything to be more or less despised which has no social rank, so that the affection, pleasure, or grief of a clown are looked upon as of no interest compared with the affection and grief of a well-bred man;—just so far, in all these several ways, the feeling induced by what is called a ‘liberal education’ is utterly adverse to the understanding of noble art; and the name which is given to the feeling,—*Taste, Goût, Gusto*,—in all languages, indicates the baseness of it, for it implies that art gives only a kind of pleasure analogous to that derived from eating by the palate.—*Ruskin.*

The qualities most frequently ascribed to a good taste are: (1) Refinement, implying a progress, so that what is pleasing in one age, or one period of life, is not so in another; (2) Delicacy, implying the ability to discover

beauties and blemishes that are hidden from the common eye, which perceives only what is in some degree bold and palpable; (3) Correctness, implying agreement with the general consent of an age, and, still more, of successive ages. The second leans more to feeling, and is manifested chiefly in discerning latent beauty and true merit; the third leans more to reason, is comparative, discriminative, and respects chiefly the improvement of taste through its connection with the understanding. The first may be said to comprehend both. A highly refined, a true taste, makes use of the senses, but does not rest in them. The main thing is the *design*, the intelligible form, not construable to sense, but addressing itself solely to the inward eye.

It will be seen at once that the scientific and rhetorical sense of taste is different from that of common acceptance. In fact, the term has a diversity of meanings, three of which are to be particularly noted. When a person is said to have a taste for a certain pursuit, occupation, amusement or study, it is really meant that he has a fondness or inclination for it, and either of these words would be more precise. When he is said to have a taste for the beautiful, it is meant that he has a lively susceptibility for it. When he is said to have good taste in objects of beauty, it is meant that he judges readily and accurately upon such objects as awaken that susceptibility.

The application of taste to the several fine arts is criticism, whose office is to distinguish the beautiful from its opposite in every performance; and from particular instances (such as come nearest to the standard) to ascend to general principles concerning the various kinds of beauty in works of genius. The Fine Arts are: (1) *Architecture*, in which the realization of beauty or subjective idea is subordinate to an end of outward utility; (2) *Landscape-gardening*, which comprehends, primarily, the

laying out of grounds, and, secondarily, the treatment of these grounds by culture, and the investment of them with such forms as utility and beauty may prescribe—having its spring (like the preceding) in human necessity, but, in the supply of this want, inviting decoration; (3) *Sculpture*, whose distinctive excellence is that it embodies the highest possible degree of formal beauty in a single figure, converting (unlike the first) the marble or the stone into an expression of the inspiring idea—most often, man, in the full-developed energy of his physical, moral, and intellectual being; (4) *Painting*, which, with the superior pliancy and manageableness of its material, can represent under one view a number of distinct objects or simultaneous events, and can exhibit, beyond rivalry, those more delicate and evanescent phenomena which interpret the heart to the eye, showing, in the human figure, the inner state, its passions and emotions, in all their depth and variety, (5) *Music*, in which the sensuous element, sound, is completely blended and identified with the feeling or passion expressed, the opposites of variety and unity being reconciled in a satisfying whole by two essential properties—quantity, or duration in time, and quality, or the key and scale of tone, the one laying the foundation of rhythmical movement, the other of melody and harmony; yielding no distinct image, yet awakening associations, reviving memories, and at its best, full of haunting thought, a sense of the mystery of being; (6) *Literature*, in the less extended sense—thought and feeling carefully, curiously, or beautifully expressed, affording pleasure not only by the things said, but by the way in which they are said.

The pleasures derived from natural objects and the elegant arts are known as the Pleasures of Taste. They may also be called Pleasures of the Imagination, as far as they call for the exercise of this faculty or depend upon

its action. So far as related to organic impression, they are yielded first and principally by the most refined and spiritual of all our senses, sight and hearing. There is, to be sure, a pleasure in the scent of a rose, in the flavor of a fruit, in the manipulation of a smooth, soft, and velvet surface; but the nostrils, the palate, and the touch, are by common consent, held to be of inferior rank to the eyes and ears, whose pleasures are an end in themselves — increasing in exquisiteness by repetition, contributing to the refining rather than the sustaining of life, and never exposing their votaries to the charge of intemperance or inordinate indulgence. ‘We stand, therefore, engaged in honor, as well as interest, to second the purposes of nature, by cultivating the pleasures of the eye and ear; those, especially, that require extraordinary culture — such as arise from poetry, painting, sculpture, music, gardening, and architecture. This, especially, is the duty of the opulent, who have leisure to improve their minds and their feelings. The fine arts are contrived to give pleasure to the eye and ear, disregarding the inferior senses. A taste for these arts is a plant that grows naturally in many soils; but without culture, scarcely to perfection in any soil. It is susceptible of much refinement; and is, by proper care, greatly improved. In this respect, a taste in the fine arts goes hand in hand with the moral sense, to which, indeed, it is nearly allied.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lord Kames.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### ÆSTHETICS OF EXPRESSION—THE BEAUTIFUL.

He who cannot see the beautiful side is a bad painter, a bad friend, a bad lover; he cannot lift his mind and his heart so high as goodness.—**JOUBERT.**

The useful encourages itself; for the multitude produce it, and no one can dispense with it; the beautiful must be encouraged; for few can set it forth, and many need it.—**GOETHE.**

**A**N affluent and immortal theme, to some notion of which we may be helped, though we reach not the heart of the mystery.

A figure of speech, a thought, a star, a landscape, a musical air, may strike us pleasantly without any direct and definite exertion of the intellect. What is that one property that they have in common—what is beauty? According to Hume, it is subjective—a mere *feeling*, a quality residing in the percipient, and not in the external object. ‘Things are not beautiful in themselves,’ says Jeffrey, ‘but only as they serve to suggest interesting conceptions to the mind.’ Therefore, a poem and a pair of slippers, an act of charity and a saddle-horse, are equally beautiful, since all alike may lead to the same chain of interesting remembrances.

The universal speech and consciousness of men attest that the beautiful comes into our experience from without, a reality not originated within us. But what is it in the object that constitutes its beauty? Is it novelty? All things, when first seen, are novel; but not all are beautiful, while many continue to charm us when they have ceased to be curious or strange, and others even *displease*

simply because they are new. Or is it utility — fitness to conduce in some way to our welfare, to serve in some way our purposes? Then is a stack of straw fairer than the roseate hues of morning, or a spade more admirable than the Apollo Belvidere? Is it *unity in variety*? Not everything is beautiful that presents this combination, while some things that lack it, as particular colors, valley-mists or cloud-masses, are beautiful. Is it *order and proportion*? The snout or the leg of the swine is as fine a specimen of these elements in conjunction as that of the agile and graceful courser, but it is not equally admired, if admired at all.

There remains the spiritual theory, which makes beauty to consist in the more or less translucent embodiment of idea. Behind and within every form of being — the crystal, the violet, the spreading elm, the drooping willow, the statue, the cathedral, insect, bird, beast, and man — there is immanent, and variously manifested, the Over-Soul: all mean something, all express something; and in proportion to depth of meaning, to luminousness of expression — in proportion as the Infinite discloses itself, is object, act, thought, or emotion beautiful. Thus Hegel becomes intelligible, when he calls the beautiful ‘the sensuous shining forth of the idea’; and Schelling, who says: ‘The beautiful is beyond form; it is substance, the universal; it is the look and expression of the spirit of Nature.’

We are to be congratulated that so high an authority as Mr. Ruskin has spoken so fully, so clearly, so instructively, on this subject. Of the theoretical writings of others in this field, we might almost say, ‘Burn them, for their value is in *Modern Painters*.’ Surely no apology will be needed for quoting, at some length, utterances that will so amply reward your attention by the nobleness

of their truths and the excellence of their manner. And, foremost, a definition of the word:

By the term beauty, then, properly are signified two things. First, that external quality of bodies already so often spoken of, and which, whether it occur in a stone, flower, beast, or in man, is absolutely identical, which, as I have already asserted, may be shown to be in some sort typical of the Divine attributes, and which, therefore, I shall, for distinction's sake, call typical beauty; and, secondarily, the appearance of felicitous fulfilments of function in living things, more especially of the joyful and right exertion of perfect life in man. And this kind of beauty I shall call vital beauty.

Accordingly, of external Nature so conceived:

She has a body and a soul like man; but her soul is the Deity. It is possible to represent the body without the spirit; and this shall be like to those whose senses are only cognizant of body. It is possible to represent the spirit in its ordinary and inferior manifestations; and this shall be like to those who have not watched for its moments of power. It is possible to represent the spirit in its secret and high operations; and this shall be like only to those to whose watching they have been revealed.

In the more definite articulate expression of the spiritual, lies the main difference between the mineral and the plant. A warmer sympathy with the latter is natural, and the attribution of life to it but expresses the finer feeling of fellowship with it. Happy is he who in the material forms of the world recognizes the Divine.

Of that second kind of beauty which consists in the 'appearance of felicitous fulfilment of function in living things':

I have already noticed the example of very pure and high typical beauty which is to be found in the lines and gradations of unsullied snow. If, passing to the edge of a sheet of it, upon the lower Alps, early in May, we find, as we are nearly sure to find, two or three little round openings pierced in it, and through these emergent, a slender, pensive, fragile flower, whose small, dark, purple-fringed bell hangs down and shudders over the icy cleft that it has cloven, as if partly wondering at its own recent grave, and partly dying of very fatigue after its hard won victory; we shall be, or we ought to



be, moved by a totally different impression of loveliness from that which we receive among the dead ice and the idle clouds. There is now uttered to us a call for sympathy, now offered to us an image of moral purpose and achievement, which, however unconscious or senseless the creature may indeed be that so seems to call, cannot be heard without affection, nor contemplated without worship, by any of us whose heart is rightly tuned, or whose mind is clearly and surely sighted.

From the foregoing observations, it must be plain that certain elements enter into the *formation* of the beautiful — are *signs* of it, others into the *enjoyment* of it — are reinforcements of its effects, while they do not constitute its ground or essence. Of the latter class is association, which, though not a principle or cause of beauty, is a most important source of the pleasures of taste. Thus of music the poet says:

With easy force it opens all the cells  
Where memory slept. Wherever we have heard  
A kindred melody, the scene recurs,  
And with it all its pleasures and its pains.

A withered leaf may assist us to live over again the happy hours that have vanished into the rearward of Time. How much additional interest does childhood derive from its suggestions of innocence, of careless gaiety, of unsuspecting confidence, of helplessness, of blameless and blissful ignorance! In a rural landscape — green meadows dotted with sheep and cattle, and watered by purling streams, woodland roads with figures of men and horses, well-tilled fields bordered by tufted hedges, and neat cottages half hidden in trees, seen under bright skies and in good weather, much of the gratification afforded by the scene is due to the picture of human happiness that the mind is assisted in forming — to the appearances of comfort and content, of the industry by which those blessings are insured, and of the simplicity by which they are contrasted with the bustle of a city life; and perhaps our

delight is enhanced by the dreams in which we are led to indulge 'of those primitive or fabulous times when man was uncorrupted by luxury and ambition, and of those humble retreats in which we fondly imagine that love and philosophy may find an unpolluted asylum.' For the rest, let us transcribe a passage from Mr. Alison:

What, for instance, is the impression we feel from the scenery of spring? The soft and gentle green with which the earth is spread, the feeble texture of the plants and flowers, the young of animals just entering into life, and the remains of winter yet lingering among the woods and hills — all conspire to infuse into our minds somewhat of that fearful tenderness with which infancy is usually beheld. With such a sentiment, how innumerable are the ideas which present themselves to our imagination! ideas, it is apparent, by no means confined to the scene before our eyes, or to the possible desolation which may yet await its infant beauty, but which almost involuntarily extend themselves to analogies with the life of man, and bring before us all those images of hope or fear, which, according to our peculiar situations, have the dominion of our hearts! — The beauty of autumn is accompanied with a similar exercise of thought: The leaves begin then to drop from the trees; the flowers and shrubs, with which the fields were adorned in the summer months, decay, the woods and groves are silent; the sun himself seems gradually to withdraw his light, or to become enfeebled in his power. Who is there, who, at this season, does not feel his mind impressed with a sentiment of melancholy? or who is able to resist that current of thought, which, from such appearances of decay, so naturally leads him to the solemn imagination of that inevitable fate, which is to bring on alike the decay of life, of empire, and of nature itself?

The beautiful in literature comprises all that raises in the mind an emotion of the gladsome, placid kind, similar to that excited by the contemplation of the beautiful in nature. It appears in the theme, in the invention, in thought, sentiment, imagery, movement — matter and style. 'This singular advantage, writings and discourse possess, that they encompass so large and rich a field on all sides, and have power to exhibit, in great perfection, not a single set of objects only, but almost the whole of

those which give pleasure to taste and imagination ; whether that pleasure arise from sublimity, from beauty in its different forms, from design and art, from moral sentiment, from novelty, from harmony, from wit, humor, and ridicule.' The subject of literary beauty has been abundantly illustrated in this and preceding chapters. Shakespeare, Milton, Goldsmith, Wordsworth, Scott, Shelley, Keats, Irving, Hawthorne, Tennyson, George Eliot, and Ruskin, are a notable few of the many whose pictures enrich the great art-gallery of English letters. Artists of the beautiful are they all, loving and delicate.

When beauty is joined with sadness or sorrow, we have pathos, a word that, derived from the Greek *παθεῖν*, primarily meant *to suffer*, and implied vehemence; but has now grown to mean that which awakens tender emotions, chiefly those of humane and hearty sympathy. Dickens' description of the death of little Nell in *Old Curiosity Shop* is a good example. Only reminding you of Keats' exquisite lines on the marble figures of the Grecian urn, we cite from the *Pleasures of Hope* the following:

Hark, the wild maniac sings to chide the gale  
That wafts so slow her lover's distant sail; . . .  
Oft when yon moon has climbed the midnight sky  
And the lone sea-bird wakes its wildest cry,  
Piled on the steep, her blazing fagots burn  
To hail the bark that never can return:  
And still she waits, but scarce forbears to weep,  
That constant love can linger on the deep.

The pathetic is commensurate with literature itself, and nowhere is it more strikingly present than in Ecclesiastes, the Book of Job, and the penitential Psalms. It was the Hebraic race that taught, 'By the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better,' and 'Better is the house of mourning than the house of mirth.' No quality of literature is profounder, holier, more purifying, more elevating, more enduring.

When beauty is sought by the disposal of heterogeneous elements in such a manner as to produce, on the whole, the effect of beautiful wildness—the appearance of being wildly free from rules, we have the *picturesque*, which, as an acknowledged element of art, was born in the contrasts of mediæval times, when the fragments and ruins of ancient things were gradually grouping themselves together with the new and still half-savage, into something like unity. Gnarled oaks, ruined towers in forest depths, old and abandoned mills, with the fruitless stream still slipping through the worn wheel, Gothic cathedrals, tempest-worn, perhaps overgrown in part with moss or ivy, may be offered as instances. In literature, illustrations may be found, among other places, in the feudal romances and in *Marmion*.

The primitive of *beauty* means *good*. With the Greek, the perfect fair, the ideal of human aspiration, was the beautiful and good — τὸ καλὸν καγαθόν. From the days of Plato, the good, the true, and the beautiful, have been accepted as the all-comprehensive ideas. Philosophers and poets have regarded them as standing in very close relationship to one another, differing rather in their mode of expression and in the relations they sustain to us, than in essence. It is in this spirit that Whittier says:

The good is always beautiful, the beautiful is good.

And Keats:

Beauty is truth, truth beauty — that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

Likewise Akenside:

Truth and good are one,  
And beauty dwells in them, and they in her,  
With like participation.

‘If,’ says Cousin, ‘the true, the good, and the beautiful appear to be distinct and separate, it is not because they are so in fact, but because they are given forth [with

different relative prominence] in different objects.' Yet, whatever may be their ultimate and real character, whether of kinship or of oneness, they differ in aspect. A homely face may be endeared to us by its light of genius, its glow of sympathy, and loveliness of heart, but we shall not be brought to pronounce it, in itself, beautiful, though attractive. The good, again, proposes an end to be accomplished, and involves the idea of moral obligation, while the beautiful proposes no end, carries no obligation, but is purely free and spontaneous. The true is addressed, not to the senses, but to the reason.

One of the most remarkable things in the world is the abundance of beauty — of what not only serves material needs, but feeds and comforts the finer and nicer faculties of man. The commonest things are adorned, not with ornament that is put on, but with that which grows out of their substance, which affects their form and shines through every lineament:

Therefore on every morrow, are we wreathing  
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,  
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth  
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,  
Of all the unhealthy and o'erdarkened ways  
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,  
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall  
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,  
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon  
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils  
With the green world they live in; and clear rills  
That for themselves a cooling covert make  
'Gainst the hot season; the midforest brake  
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms;  
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms  
We have imagined for the mighty dead;  
All lovely tales that we have heard or read;  
An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.—*Keats.*

Only to spirit can spirit be intelligible. The shining of the Eternal—its richness, nobleness, purity, will be lost upon us, without an inward appetite therefor. To find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, else a world-wide search will not discover it. To the unkindled mind the face of nature is darkness, and art is void of charm. 'He,' says Lord Jeffery, 'will always see the most beauty whose affections are warmest and most exercised, whose imagination is the most powerful, and who has the most accustomed himself to attend to the objects by which he is surrounded.' To a Wordsworth, the meanest thing that grows gives thoughts too deep for tears.

Sensibility to the beautiful—competence to feel the invisible in the visible, is a liberalizing and civilizing power. The more of it, as thus defined, is ever the more of the true. The higher and more varied its culture, the more is the culture of the intellect drawn in and constrained. Its stimulating sunshine refines, purifies, and expands the moral feelings also, just as companionship with the ugly, false, and vicious, corrupts, stupefies, and degrades them. To the action of every other faculty it imparts vividness and grace. Highly gifted with it, men become creative, upborne and inspired by the ideal, which burns as a transfiguring flame. Without it, science is cramped and poor, religion is narrow, life unripened and fractional.

The nature of man, indeed, from childhood, and from the humblest conditions, seems, as it were, ever to cry aloud for some sign or token of what is beautiful in some of the many spheres of mind or sense. But too often the fructifying instinct languishes and dies, because overlaid by the nicknacks and other rubbish of Vanity Fair, because of the too hard stress of bodily want, or the pressure of excessive business. Men postpone their manhood till they have an estate, then find that the estate rides them. They

eat and drink, that they may afterward execute the ideal. 'Would it not be better,' says Emerson, 'to begin higher up,—to serve the ideal before they eat and drink, to serve the ideal in eating and drinking, in drawing the breath, and in the functions of life? Beauty must come back to the useful arts, and the distinction between the fine and the useful arts be forgotten. If history were truly told, if life were nobly spent, it would be no longer easy or possible to distinguish the one from the other. In nature, all is useful, all is beautiful.'

## CHAPTER XIV.

### ÆSTHETICS OF EXPRESSION—THE SUBLIME.

The soul is naturally elevated by the true sublime, and, lifted up with exultation, is filled with transport and inward pride.—LONGINUS.

The beautiful has reference to the form of an object, and the facility with which it is comprehended. For beauty, magnitude is an impediment. Sublimity, on the contrary, requires magnitude as its condition, and the formless is not unfrequently sublime.—SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON.

ANY object, thought, or emotion, which conveys an impression of surpassing greatness or power, is sublime. The tempest-tossed ocean, the roaring and impassable cataract, the shout of a multitude, eclipses, thunder, and abysses, depth beyond depth of the starry heavens, lands swept with hurricanes, the wide expanse of earth, barren with moor or waving with corn and forest, stand, with other similar scenes, in the first rank of material sublimity. Unflinching courage, towering ambition, victory over self, uncommon intrepidity and perfect composure in some critical and high situation, as devotion to truth in defiance of popular fury, or the deliberate measurement of the death-doom, are types of sublimity in the moral world. Of this description are the historic words of Cæsar to the terrified pilot, 'What fear you? You carry Cæsar'; of Hildebrand, who, dying at Salerno after a long and bitter struggle, said, 'I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and therefore I die in exile'; of Luther on departing for Worms, 'Though there were as many devils in Worms as tiles on the house-tops, still I would enter'; of Raleigh, as he felt the edge of the axe before laying his head on the block, 'It is a



sharp remedy, but will cure all diseases'; of Sidney, as he motioned away the water to the expiring soldier, 'Thy necessity is greater than mine'; of Gilbert, going down at sea, 'Never mind, we are as near heaven at sea as ashore'; of Nelson, on the eve of battle, 'England expects every man to do his duty'; of Napoleon, 'Soldiers, from the summits of yonder pyramids forty centuries look down upon you'; of the martyred Latimer to his companion at the stake, as the lighted faggots were brought, 'Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man: we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.'

Every one is conscious that the effect produced by the contemplation of such things is peculiar—pleasurable, indeed, but altogether of the serious kind, marked even by a degree of awfulness and solemnity at its height; an elevation and expansion of the mind much above and beyond its ordinary state. Thus a chief test of the sublime is that it banishes littleness of thought and feeling. In the domain of the physical, most objects of sublimity, it will be readily seen, excite emotions of a mixed nature,—humiliation and awe, perhaps, or aspiring purpose, overcoming the timid and feeble, rousing the lofty and daring. Witness the exultation of Byron in an Alpine thunderstorm:

The sky is changed!—and such a change! O Night,  
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,  
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light  
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,  
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,  
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,  
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,  
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,  
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!  
And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!  
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be

A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—  
 A portion of the tempest and of thee!  
 How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,  
 And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!  
 And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee  
 Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain mirth,  
 As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

It will be understood from these remarks that the leading elements of the sublime, or sources of its accompanying emotion, are, externally, the vast and illimitable, darkness, obscurity, and silence, which last three ideas affect powerfully the imagination, as is fully exemplified in Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, particularly in these lines:

Still as a slave before his lord,  
 The ocean hath no blast;  
 His great bright eye most silently  
 Up to the moon is cast.

Also in Campbell's *Last Man* :

Earth's cities had no sound nor tread,  
 And ships were drifting with the dead  
 To shores where all was dumb.

And in this noble passage of Job:

In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face, the hair of my flesh stood up: it stood still; but I could not discern the form thereof; an image was before mine eyes; there was silence; and I heard a voice — 'Shall mortal man be more just than God?'

If to these elements of sublimity we add spiritual heroism, self-sacrifice, Promethean endurance, martyr-like constancy — in brief, the more forceful and massive phenomena of the moral world,— we shall perceive the truth of the statement that sublimity is only another word for the effect of greatness — greatness of matter, space, power, virtue, beauty. Which of them does not enter into Emerson's picturesque-sublime conception of the Procession of

Life, 'the eternal picture which nature paints in the streets with moving men and children, beggars and fine ladies, draped in red and green and blue and gray; long-haired, grizzled, white-faced, wrinkled, giant, dwarf, expanded, elfish,—capped and based by heaven, earth, and sea.'

The foundation of the sublime in literature is in the thought, the subject or object of which must be such as, in itself, is able, with sovereign power, to fill, expand, and move the soul. The Bible abounds in highest instances, especially where, as in the following passage, the Almighty is described:

He stood, and measured the earth;  
 He beheld, and drove asunder the nations;  
 The everlasting hills were scattered,  
 The perpetual hills did bow.  
 The mountains saw thee, and they trembled;  
 The overflowing of the waters passed by;  
 The deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high.

The first, second, and third books of *Paradise Lost* are a sustained flight into the regions of the sublime. Take, for example, the description of Satan as he appears at the head of the vanquished infernal hosts:

He, above the rest,  
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent,  
 Stood like a tower; his form had not yet lost  
 All her original brightness, nor appear'd  
 Less than archangel ruin'd; and the excess  
 Of glory obscur'd; as when the sun new risen,  
 Looks through the horizontal misty air,  
 Shorn of his beams; or, from behind the moon,  
 In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds  
 On half the nations, and with fear of change  
 Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone  
 Above them all th' archangel.

Then this spectacle of a superior nature erecting itself against distress, annihilating by its own fire that of the hell into which it is plunged:

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,  
 Said then the lost archangel, this the seat  
 That we must change for heav'n, this mournful gloom  
 For that celestial light? Be it so, since he  
 Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid  
 What shall be right: farthest from him is best,  
 Whom reason hath equal'd, force hath made supreme  
 Above his equals. Farewell happy fields,  
 Where joy forever dwells! Hail horrors, hail  
 Infernal world! and thou profoundest Hell  
 Receive thy new possessor; one who brings  
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.

It will be seen that in the above descriptions there is nothing trivial to degrade the whole; no unnecessary words to relax the tension of the mind; no incongruity between swelling diction and a commonplace subject. Abstract and general terms are avoided; the most striking circumstances are selected; and capital images are brought close together, each worthy of that which it illustrates or supports; in short, there is grandeur of manner conspiring with grandeur of substance. These qualities are further exemplified when Satan, surprised in the garden of Eden, is preparing to battle with the angel sentinels:

Th' angelic squadron bright  
 Turned fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns  
 To hem him round, . . .  
 . . . On the other side, Satan, alarmed,  
 Collecting all his might, dilated stood,  
 Like Teneriffe or Atlas, unremoved;  
 His stature reached the sky, and on his crest  
 Sat Horror plumed.

And again when he is stricken down by the sword of Abdiel:

Ten paces huge  
 He back recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee,  
 His massy spear upstay'd; as if on earth  
 Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,

Sidelong had pushed a mountain from its seat,  
Half sunk with all its pines.

The essentials of imagery and style are combined with eminent effect in this passage from Ossian:

A blast came from the mountain: on its wings was the spirit of Loda. He came to his place in his terrors, and shook his dusky spear. His eyes appear like flames in his dark face: his voice is like distant thunder. Fingal advanced his spear in night, and raised his voice on high. 'Son of night, retire: call thy winds, and fly! Why dost thou come to my presence with thy shadowy arms? Do I fear thy gloomy form, spirit of dismal Loda? Weak is thy shield of clouds; feeble is that meteor thy sword! The blast rolls them together: and thou thyself art lost. Fly from my presence, son of night! call thy winds and fly!'

When Lear is turned out of doors by his daughters, in the wild night, the storm in his breast marries itself with a ghastly joy to the storm of the elements, which seems echoed in the crashing splendor of the verse:

Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! Rage, blow!  
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout  
Till you have drenched our steeples, drowned the cocks!  
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,  
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,  
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,  
Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!  
Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,  
That make ingrateful man!

Another fine example of the dramatic sublime is that burst of passion — sublime grief inflamed into rage — which Shakespeare makes old Northumberland utter when he hears of his son Percy's death:

Now bind my brows with iron, and approach  
The ruggedest hour that time and fate can bring  
To frown upon enraged Northumberland.  
Let heaven kiss earth! Now let not nature's hand  
Keep the wide floods confined; let order die!  
And let the world no longer be a stage,

To feed contention in a lingering act;  
But let one spirit of the first-born Cain  
Reign in all bosoms; and all hearts being set  
On bloody courses, the rude scene may end,  
And darkness be the burier of the dead!

The mind cannot be kept forever on the heights. No writer has sufficient force of genius to be uninterruptedly sublime. Not all are even occasionally so. Sublimity is the fire of imagination, breaking forth more frequently, and with greater lustre, in some than in others. Of modern English authors it may be said that no poet since Milton affords so many passages of the kind as the impetuous and vehement Byron.

On the other hand, beauty, because less intense, is prolonged and may be perpetual.

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale  
Her infinite variety,

says Shakespeare, and the same truth is finely expressed by Keats:

A thing of beauty is a joy forever;  
Its loveliness increases; it will never  
Pass into nothingness, but still will keep  
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
Full of sweet dreams, and health and quiet breathing.

The difference is well described and illustrated in Tennyson's ode to Milton:

O mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies,  
O skilled to sing of Time or Eternity,  
God-gifted organ-voice of England,  
Milton, a name to resound for ages;  
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,  
Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,  
Tower, as the deep-toned empyrean  
Rings to the roar of an angel onset —  
Me rather all that bowery loveliness,  
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,

And bloom profuse and cedar arches  
Charin, as a wanderer out in ocean,  
Where some refulgent sunset of India  
Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,  
And crimson-hued the stately palm-woods  
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

The highest æsthetic effect is produced by the conjunction of the sublime and beautiful, as in Westminster Abbey, the cathedral of St. Peter, the Falls of Niagara. Milton never forgets this principle of art. So—beauty tempering sublimity, sublimity elevating beauty—Pandemonium rises

Like an exultation, with the sound  
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,  
Built like a temple where pilasters round  
Were set, and Doric pillars, overlaid  
With golden architrave; nor did there want  
Cornice, or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;  
The roof was fretted gold.

## CHAPTER XV.

### ÆSTHETICS OF EXPRESSION—THE RIDICULOUS.

Humor is wit and love.—THACKERAY.

Every resemblance of ideas is not that which we call wit, unless it be such a one that gives delight and surprise to the reader. These two properties seem essential to wit, more particularly the last.—ADDISON.

WIT is derived from the Saxon *witan*, modern German *wissen*, which means 'to know.' Its first application, therefore, was to the intellect. A witty was formerly a wise man, a man of quick apprehension, of vigorous intellectual powers. As late as the reign of Elizabeth, a man of great wit signified a man of great judgment. To this day, we say of a person, if he is self-possessed and rational, that he is in his wits; if otherwise, that he is out of his wits. It is in this general sense of quick wisdom that Pope observes:

True wit is nature to advantage drest,  
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed.

Lord Russell's definition of a proverb, 'The wisdom of many and the wit of one,' would thus form a witticism; likewise Coleridge's comparison of a single thought to a wave of the sea, which takes its shape from the waves which precede and follow it; and of experience to the stern-lights of a ship, which illumine only the track it has passed.

But wit, as currently understood, is a diverting or mirth-making power—the power of so associating objects not usually connected as to produce a pleasant surprise. Its essential element consists in the accidental, awkward,



or intentional grouping or bringing together, in a sudden and unexpected manner, of objects or ideas that are in their nature incongruous. Most of the wit that we call Irish is the result of *accident*—a blunder, a bull. A gentleman in a coffee-house writing a letter, and perceiving an Irishman behind him, concluded: 'I would say more, but a tall Irishman is reading over my shoulder every word I write.' 'You lie! you scoundrel,' said the self-convicted Hibernian.

Where the juxtaposition is *designed*, as in what is more properly denominated wit, the incongruities are of various types. The debasement of the elevated and grave by means of figures and phrases that are mean and contemptible, takes the name of *burlesque*:

'I love to hear the thunder burst,  
O'er woodland, plain, and hill;—  
Like the loud note of angry swine,  
Petitioning for swill.'

Butler's *Hudibras* affords numerous illustrations. See also Cervantes' description of the battle between Don Quixote and the wind-mills, a burlesque on the ancient tournaments. To this division belong compositions in which a prevailing serious tone is unexpectedly changed at the close, as in Goldsmith's *Elegy on Madam Blaise*:

She strove the neighborhood to please  
With manners wondrous winning;  
She never followed wicked ways,—  
*Unless when she was sinning.*

Of similar nature is the *parody*, a composition of like sound to another, but of ludicrously different meaning. A writer, for example, enumerating the miseries of life, says that, as he climbed into a berth in a river steam-boat,

I thought, as I hollowed my narrow bed,  
And punched up my meagre pillow,  
How the foe and the stranger should tread o'er my head,  
As I sped on my way o'er the billow.

Which is evidently a parody on a stanza in that beautiful poem that commemorates the burial of Sir John Moore.

The converse of the burlesque is the *mock-heroic*, which aggrandizes the insignificant. In this kind of pleasantry the writings of Pope abound. Lord Petre having cut a lock of hair from the head of a fashionable beauty, and a quarrel ensuing, Pope, thinking to laugh the estranged lovers into reconciliation, writes an epic — *The Rape of the Lock*. Invocations, apostrophes, councils, fatal catastrophes, fearful combats between beaux and belles, spirits of the air — sylphs, gnomes, nymphs, and salamanders — form the poetic mechanism and action. The loftiness of style contrasts with the frivolous nature of the events. The history of a trifle is given with the pomp of heraldry, and the meanest things are set off with stately phrase and profuse ornament. A game at cards is a mimic Waterloo, whose hosts are marshalled by the king and queen of hearts:

Behold four kings, in majesty revered,  
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;  
And four fair queens whose hands sustain a flow'r,  
Th' expressive emblem of their softer power;  
Four knaves in garb succinct, a trusty band;  
Caps on their heads, and halberds in their hand;  
And particolored troops, a shining train,  
Drawn forth to combat on the velvet plain.

The oft-quoted passage in which the heroine's rage is told, is a good example of the ludicrous junction of small things with great:

Then flashed the living lightning from her eyes,  
And screams of horror rent th' affrighted skies.  
Not louder shrieks to pitying Heav'n are cast,  
When husbands or when lapdogs breathe their last.

Wit, as now understood, is often *epigrammatic*, chiefly conveying depreciation. 'Is not Geneva dull?' said a

friend to Talleyrand. 'Yes,' he replied, 'especially when they amuse themselves.'

Said Celia to a reverend dean,  
 'What reason can be given,  
 Since marriage is a holy thing,  
 That they have none in heaven?'  
 'They have,' says he, 'no women there.'  
 She quick returns the jest,  
 'Women there are, but I'm afraid  
 They cannot find a priest.'—*Swift*.

Witty retort in conversation, as above, is usually styled *repartee*. 'How happy I am to be seated between a wit and a beauty,' said a fop to Madame de Staël. 'Yes,' replied she, 'and without possessing either.' Jerrold was famous for his brilliancy and readiness. At a certain supper of sheeps' heads, a guest was so charmed with his fare that he threw down his knife and fork, exclaiming, 'Well, say I, sheeps' heads for ever!' 'There's egotism,' said Jerrold.

Other species of witticism are the varieties of play upon words, *double entendres*, or double meanings, including irony, innuendo, sarcasm, conundrums, and puns. The last, though least meritorious, are most frequent. Specimens of the higher order are:

His death, which happened in his berth,  
 At forty odd befell;  
 They went and told the sexton, and  
 The sexton toll'd the bell.—*Hood*.

MR. STRAHAN,—You are a member of Parliament, and one of the majority which has doomed my country to destruction. You have begun to burn our towns and murder our people. Look upon your hands! They are stained with the blood of your relations! You and I were long friends. You are now my enemy, and I am

*Yours,*

B. FRANKLIN.

Witticisms not distinctively embraced in the preceding enumeration may be described as surprising the mind by

the queerness or singularity of the imagery they employ. When Curran fought his duel with Judge Egan, the latter, who was a big man, directed the attention of the second to the advantage which, in this respect, his adversary had over him: 'He may hit me as easily as he would a haystack, and I might as well be aiming at the edge of a knife as at his lean carcass.' 'Well,' said Curran, 'let the gentleman chalk the size of my body on your side, and let every ball hitting outside of that go for nothing.'

Speaking of having been shampooed at Mahommed's Baths at Brighton, Sidney Smith said, 'They squeezed enough out of me to make a lean curate.' To the Bishop of New Zealand, just before his departure for that cannibal diocese, he said: 'A bishop should be given to hospitality, and never be without a smoked little boy in the bacon-rack and a cold missionary on the sideboard.'

A witticism's prosperity—Shakespeare to the contrary—often lies not only 'in the tongue of him who makes it,' but in his manner of speaking it, and in the occasion which brings it forth. Novelty, too, is an essential ingredient. Therefore it will seldom bear transplantation, and suffers by repetition. Nothing, it has been written, is so dreary as a jest-book. The choicer wines lose their flavor by exposure.

But the dreariness of perpetual and sustained wit is fundamental. To be incessantly surprised is to be soon wearied, and finally disgusted. *Hudibras* is saved from tediousness by being read in small quantities. 'Wit is the god of moments,' says Bruyère. Butler apparently so conceives its limitations, in these lines:

We grant although he had much wit,  
He was very shy of using it,  
As being loth to wear it out;  
And therefore bore it not about,  
Unless on holidays, or so,  
As men their best apparel do

In composition and in conversation, wit should be but an occasional accompaniment. As to the first, to divert and interrupt the train of thought too much is to lose the interest and attention due to the cardinal point. As for the second, wit should be the seasoning, not the food. Usually none are so feared and hated as habitual wits, and there are no greater bores than persistent punsters.

While mirth may be secured at the cost of conviction, indulgence increases demand, and the flattered wit who constantly exhibits his power is liable to degenerate into a buffoon. Corwin was fearful that he would be remembered only as a clown. As a habit, indeed, wit is necessarily inimical to the nobler faculties. The tendency to mark and treasure trivial connections in things diverse and remote cannot become predominant without detriment to the higher, reflective power, which, neglecting relations that are distant and fanciful, adheres to what are substantial and permanent. 'Memory and wit,' says Lord Kames, 'are often conjoined: solid judgment seldom with either.' This principle, which does not deny that the cultivated and great may be witty, probably suggests Hazlitt's observation: 'Wit is the rarest quality to be met with among people of education, and the most common among the uneducated.'

A perilous possession, but still a precious one, whether we consider it as an instrument of correction and reform, an aid to discourse, or a means of relaxation and cheer. Says Sidney Smith, himself one of the keenest of wits:

I have talked of the danger of wit. I do not mean by that to enter into commonplace declamation against faculties because they are dangerous; wit is dangerous, eloquence is dangerous, a talent for observation is dangerous, everything is dangerous that has efficacy and vigor for its characteristics; nothing is safe but mediocrity. The business is, in conducting the understanding well, to risk something; to aim at uniting things that are commonly incompatible. The meaning of an extraordinary man is, that he is *eight*

men, not one man; that he has as much wit as if he had no sense, and as much sense as if he had no wit; that his conduct is as judicious as if he were the dullest of human beings, and his imagination as brilliant as if he were irretrievably ruined. But when wit is combined with sense and information; when it is softened by benevolence, and restrained by strong principles; when it is in the hands of a man who can use it and despise it, who can be witty and something much better than witty, who loves honor, justice, decency, good nature, morality, and religion, ten thousand times better than wit; wit is then a beautiful and delightful part of our nature.

There is no more interesting spectacle than to see the effects of wit upon the different characters of men; than to observe it expanding caution, relaxing dignity, unfreezing coldness, teaching age and care and pain to smile, extorting reluctant gleams of pleasure from melancholy, and charming even the pangs of grief. It is pleasant to observe how it penetrates through the coldness and awkwardness of society, gradually bringing men nearer together, and like the combined force of wine and oil, gives every man a glad heart and a shining countenance. Genuine and innocent wit like this is surely the flavor of the mind! Man could direct his ways by plain reason, and support his life by tasteless food; but God has given us wit and flavor and brightness and laughter and perfumes to enliven the days of man's pilgrimage, and to 'charm his pained steps over the burning marl.'

Let us now look for the characteristics of humor:

My friend, Sir Roger, being a good Churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing; he has likewise given a handsome pulpit-cloth, and railed in the communion-table at his own expense. He has often told me that at his coming to his estate he found his parishioners very irregular; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a common-prayer book, and at the same time employing an itinerant singing-master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the psalms—upon which they now very much value themselves, and indeed out-do most of the country churches that I have heard. As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them in very good order, and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it, he stands up and looks about him, and if

he sees anybody else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servants to them. Several other of the knight's particularities break out upon these occasions—sometimes he will be lengthening out a verse in the singing psalms, half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it; sometimes when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces *Amen* three or four times to the same prayer, and sometimes stands up when everybody else is upon their knees, to count the congregation, or see if any of his tenants are missing.—*Addison*.

Our next selection is from Fielding's *Tom Jones*. Partridge, half barber, half schoolmaster, goes to the theatre, as Tom's attendant, to witness the performance of *Hamlet*:

At the end of the play Jones asked him which of the players he had liked best. To this he answered, with some appearance of indignation at the question: 'The king without doubt.' 'Indeed, Mr. Partridge,' said Mrs. Miller, 'you are not of the same opinion with the town: for they are all agreed that Hamlet is acted by the best player who ever was on the stage.' 'He the best player!' cried Partridge, with a contemptuous sneer; 'why, I could act as well as he myself. I am sure if I had seen a ghost I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did. And then, to be sure, in that scene, as you called it, between him and his mother, where you told me he acted so fine, why, Lord help me! any man—that is, any good man—that had such a mother, would have done exactly the same. I know you are only joking with me; but, indeed, madam, though I was never at a play in London, yet I have seen acting before in the country; and the king for my money; he speaks all his words distinctly, half as loud again as the others. Anybody may see he is an actor.'

The following is from Irving's *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, the hero of which is a worthy wight of the name of Ichabod Crane, whose business is to instruct the children of his enchanted region:

He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like

a weatherecock, perched upon his spindle neck, to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield. . . . In addition to his other vocations, he was the singing-master of the neighborhood, and picked up many bright shillings by instructing the young folks in psalmody. It was a matter of no little vanity to him, on Sundays, to take his station in front of the church gallery, with a band of chosen singers; where, in his own mind, he completely carried away the palm from the parson. Certain it is, his voice resounded far above all the rest of the congregation; and there are peculiar quavers still to be heard in that church, and which may even be heard half a mile off, quite to the opposite side of the mill-pond, on a still Sunday morning, which are said to be legitimately descended from the nose of Ichabod Crane. . . . He was, in fact, an odd mixture of small shrewdness and simple credulity. His appetite for the marvellous, and his powers of digesting it, were equally extraordinary; and both had been increased by his residence in this spellbound region. No tale was too gross or monstrous for his capacious swallow. It was often his delight, after his school was dismissed in the afternoon, to stretch himself on the rich bed of clover, bordering the little brook that whimpered by his school-house, and there con over old Mather's direful tales, until the gathering dusk of the evening made the printed page a mere mist before his eyes. And then as he wended his way, by swamp and stream and awful woodland, to the farmhouse where he happened to be quartered, every sound of nature, at that witching hour, fluttered his excited imagination: the moan of the whip-poor-will from the hill-side; the boding cry of the tree-toad, that harbinger of storm; the dreary hooting of the screech-owl, or the sudden rustling in the thicket of birds frightened from their roost. The fire-flies, too, which sparkled most vividly in the darkest places, now and then startled him, as one of uncommon brightness would stream across his path; and if, by chance, a huge blockhead of a beetle came winging his blundering flight against him, the poor varlet was ready to give up the ghost, with the idea that he was struck with a witch's token. His only resource, on such occasions, either to drown thought, or drive away evil spirits, was to sing psalm tunes;—and the good people of Sleepy Hollow, as they sat by their doors of an evening, were often filled with awe, at hear-



ing his nasal melody, 'in linked sweetness long drawn out,' floating from the distant hill, or along the dusky road.

These extended quotations suggest at once the diffusive and peculiar nature of humor. The pleasure breaks out at no particular point, but follows us all the way; nowhere particularly striking, but inseparable from the character or subject. The laugh — if such there be — is not that of victory, derision, or scorn, but of innocent raillery and harmless jest — genial and kindly, the points of mirth seeming to blend into one course of visible delight.

American humor is generally far less subtle. That of Dr. Holmes is exceptionally delicate, but, though spontaneous and perpetual, it is associated with so much depth of thought, such frequent novelty of speculation, that he cannot be classified as a mere humorist. With such partial exceptions or modifications, it may be said that humor in this country, besides wanting, as a rule, in that high literary form which distinguishes the English, is extravagant, more palpable, more in the style of broad comedy. It will suit the purpose of illustration to regard Artemas Ward as its representative. In the supposititious vocation of showman and wax-work exhibitor, he went everywhere. Among the Free-Lovers, for example, 'a perfectly orful lookin female' claims him as her 'affinity':

The exsentric female clutched me frantically by the arm and hollered:

'You are mine, O you are mine!'

'Scarcely,' I sed, endeavorin to git loose from her. But she clung to me and sed:

'You are my Affinity!'

'What upon arth is that?' I shouted.

'Dost thou not know?'

'No, I dostent!'

'Listin, man, & I'll tell ye!' sed the strange female; 'foi years I hav yearned for thee. I knowd thou wast in the world, sumwhares, tho I didn't know whare. My heart said he would cum and I took courage. He *has* cum — he's here — you air him — you

air my Affinity! O 'tis too mutch! too mutch'; and she sobbed agin.

'Yes,' I anserd, 'I think it is a darn site too mutch!'

'Hast thou not yearned for me?" she yelled, ringin her hands like a female play acter.

'Not a yearn!' I bellerd at the top of my voice, throwin her away from me.

We may now attend, appreciatively, to some points of difference between wit and humor. Wit pertains rather to ideas, is thus more sudden, startling, transient; humor pertains rather to persons and things, is more continuous, forms the staple of the comic in life and literature.

Humor is all. Wit should be only brought

To turn agreeably some proper thought.—*Buckingham*.

Wit is brilliant, cutting, more admirable, liable to pall on repetition; humor is milder, the gently mirthful, long drawn out, less to be feared, immortal by its truthfulness to nature—at least in its best developments, as for instance, the character of Falstaff. While wit is more purely intellectual, humor implies an admixture of sentiment. Even Mark Twain moralizes, illustrating the fact, as do the biographies of most humorists and wits, that in the fabric of their emotions the warp of melancholy is crossed by the woof of cheerfulness.

Mr. Whipple, one of the best of observers, draws the distinction as follows:

Wit is abrupt, darting, scornful, and tosses its analogies in your face; Humor is slow and shy, insinuating its fun into your heart. Wit is negative, analytical, destructive; Humor is creative. The couplets of Pope are witty, but Sancho Panza is a humorous creation. Wit, when earnest, has the earnestness of passion, seeking to destroy; Humor has the earnestness of affection, and would lift up what is seemingly low into our charity and love. Wit, bright, rapid, and blasting as the lightning, flashes, strikes, and vanishes in an instant; Humor, warm and all-embracing as the sunshine, bathes its objects in a genial and abiding light. Wit implies hatred or contempt of folly and crime, produces its effects by brisk shocks of sur-

prise, uses the whip of scorpions and the branding-iron, stabs, stings, pinches, tortures, goads, teases, corrodes, undermines; Humor implies a sure conception of the beautiful, the majestic, and the true, by whose light it surveys and shapes their opposites. It is a human influence, softening with mirth the ragged inequalities of existence, promoting tolerant views of life, bridging over the spaces which separate the lofty from the lowly, the great from the humble.

When wit and humor are employed to influence opinion, the product is *ridicule*. The difference lies in the intention,—to excite contempt or aversion. Thus the authors of *Rejected Addresses*, in lines ostensibly on the rebuilding of Drury Lane Theatre, ridicule the materialistic doctrine of Lucretius as revived by modern science:

From floating elements in chaos hurled,  
Self-formed of atoms, sprang the infant world.  
No great First Cause inspired the happy plot,  
But all was matter,—and no matter what,—  
Atoms attracted by some law occult,  
Settling in spheres,—this globe was the result.  
I sing how casual bricks, in airy climb,  
Encountered casual cow-hairs, casual lime;  
How rafters, borne through wandering clouds elate,  
Kissed in their slope blue elemental slate,  
Clasped solid beams in chance-directed fury,  
And gave to birth our renovated Drury.

Lowell's *Biglow Papers*, written in the days of slavery, and based on the most clear conviction of justice, and its opposite, hold a very high place in literature of this class.

The special literary form for ridicule, it will be seen, is *satire*; the earliest poetical specimen of which is, in English, Langland's *Vision Concerning Piers the Plowman*; and the greatest, Butler's *Hudibras*, aimed at the hypocrisy in the Puritan party. Not unlike this, and written on the Roman model of heroic metre (of which Horace and Juvenal are well-known examples), are Dryden's *Hind and Panther*, a defence of the Romish Church against the English; Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, which magnifies the

trivial, and *Dunciad*, which belittles the great; Byron's vigorous *English Bards* and *Scotch Reviewers*. Thackeray, in all his novels, lashes the hollowness and insincerity of modern society. Shams (in the United States) are the central theme of Dickens' *Martin Chuzzlewit*. The character of Pecksniff, for instance, who regards piety as needful coin, and names his daughters Mercy and Charity, is thus drawn:

Perhaps there never was a more moral man than Mr. Pecksniff, especially in his conversation and correspondence. It was once said of him by a homely admirer, that he had a Fortunatus' purse of good sentiments in his inside. In this particular he was like the girl in the fairy tale, except that if they were not actual diamonds which fell from his lips, they were the very brightest paste, and shone prodigiously. He was a most exemplary man; fuller of virtuous precept than a copy-book. Some people likened him to a direction-post, which is always telling the way to a place, and never goes there, but these were his enemies, the shadows cast by his brightness; that was all. His very throat was moral. You saw a good deal of it. You looked over a very low fence of white cravat (whereof no man had ever beheld the tie, for he fastened it behind), and there it lay, a valley between two jutting heights of collar, serene and whiskerless before you. It seemed to say, on the part of Mr. Pecksniff, 'There is no deception, ladies and gentlemen, all is peace; a holy calm pervades me.' So did his hair, just grizzled with an iron-gray, which was all brushed off his forehead, and stood bolt upright, or slightly drooped in kindred action with his heavy eyelids. So did his person, which was sleek though free from corpulency. So did his manner, which was soft and oily. In a word, even his plain black suit, and state of widower, and dangling double eye-glass, all tended to the same purpose, and cried aloud, 'Behold the moral Pecksniff!'

*Irony* is disguised ridicule, and in controversy, as it gives an opponent no handle, becomes an embarrassing instrument of vituperation. Among Englishmen, Swift was the great master of the art. See his *Tale of a Tub*, which ridicules the Romanists and Presbyterians with a view to exalting the Church of England; and his *Gulliver*,

which, under the cloak of a voyager's journal, teaches the insignificance, vanity and falseness of human pursuits, ambitions, and hopes. A mocking goblin sits at his elbow to chill enthusiasm, to give imagination the lie, and to explode the bubbles of the ideal.

For keeping in check the follies and vices of those who are governed by no higher principle than 'the world's dread laugh,' for correcting the lighter foibles and inconsistencies of even good men, for removing abuses in philosophy, religion, and politics, ridicule has often proved the most effective weapon. Men and institutions can endure odium more easily than laughter.

In argument, ridicule puts an adversary *hors de combat*. A grave reply can never wound it. Says the elder Disraeli: 'Witty calumny and licentious raillery are airy nothings that float about us, invulnerable from their very nature, like those chimeras of hell which the sword of Æneas could not pierce—yet these shadows of truth, these false images, these fictitious realities, have made heroism tremble, turned the eloquence of wisdom into folly, and bowed down the spirit of honor itself.' When it is directed against goodness and purity, when it withers genius, and gibbets what ought to be enshrined, ridicule becomes the greatest of evils. The sneer and the malignant sarcasm are the appropriate language of devils, like Goethe's Mephistopheles and Byron's Lucifer.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### DEPARTMENTS OF EXPRESSION—EPISTLE.

Nothing gives so just an idea of an age as genuine letters; nay, history waits for its last seal from them.—HORACE WALPOLE.

NEXT to the essay, which we are to consider presently, the letter is the most agreeable as well as the most instructive form of the minor literature. On the one hand, it is the most familiar species of writing, and approaches the nearest to ordinary conversation; on the other, its written disclosures help us to a knowledge of individual character and of the movements of mankind, affording interesting pictures of the times, and materials for literary and political history. Of no slight historical value, for instance, are the earliest English specimens, the correspondence of the Paston family during the era of the wars of York and Lancaster. Treating, in plain and artless language, of private affairs, they explain and illuminate incidentally much of the national, domestic, and social condition and the course of public events.

As the English became a literary people, familiar letters served as a vehicle for the feelings, opinions, and reflections of our authors. Bishop Hall, in a dedication to the son of James I, claims the honor of introducing 'this new fashion of discourse by epistles, new to our language, usual to others; and as novelty is never without plea of use, more free, more familiar.' James Howell gave us his own times, as well as his own history, in 'Familiar letters, domestic and foreign, historical, political, and philosophical, upon emergent occasions.' Perhaps our most famous

contribution of letters is that of Pope, who, though ever mindful of the public regard, reveals to us his personal qualities—his refinement, his delicacy of judgment, his critical taste, his wit, his generous sensibility, his conceit, his affectation, his passion for intrigue and stratagem. When the letter-writer casts his eye toward the public, while appearing to write only for his friends, the product, according to the well-known phrase, is apt to smell too much of the lamp. The censure of artificiality falls less heavily on Swift; very lightly, or not at all, on Gray, Cowper, and Burns. ‘I once thought Swift’s letters,’ said Cowper, ‘the best that could be written, but I like Gray’s better. His humor, or his wit, or whatever it is to be called, is never ill-natured or offensive, and yet, I think, equally poignant with the Dean’s.’ Perhaps no long collection of letters can be continuously read with the same sustained interest as Cowper’s own. They are so manifestly sincere and unstudied that there could be no need of his assurance: ‘Now upon the faith of a poor creature, I have said all that I have said without the least intention to say one word of it when I began; but it is thus with my thoughts: when you shake a crab-tree, the fruit falls: good for nothing indeed when you have got it, but still the best that is to be expected of a crab-tree.’ The slack correspondent who complains that he has nothing to write about, should learn from Cowper how much may be made out of how little. No one has told more completely, in these ‘fragments of the human mind,’ the story of his life, including its deplorable frailties, than Robert Burns, whose letters possess an imperishable charm. The following, to an old Irvine friend, may not be out of place here:

EDINBURGH, 30th Dec., 1787.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have met with few things in life which have given me more pleasure than Fortune’s kindness to you since those days in which we met in the vale of misery; as I can honestly say

that I never knew a man who more truly deserved it, or to whom my heart more truly wished it. I have been much indebted since that time to your story and sentiments, for steeling my mind against evils, of which I have had a pretty decent share. My Will-o'-wisp fate you know: do you recollect a Sunday we spent together in Eglinton Woods? You told me, on my repeating some verses to you, that you wondered I could resist the temptation of sending verses of such merit to a magazine. It was from this remark I derived that idea of my own pieces which encouraged me to endeavour at the character of a poet. I am happy to hear that you will be two or three months at home. As soon as a bruised limb will permit me, I shall return to Ayrshire, and we shall meet; 'and faith I hope we'll not sit dumb, nor yet cast out!'

I have much to tell you 'of men, their manners, and their ways'; perhaps a little of the other sex. Apropos, I beg to be remembered to Mrs. Brown. There, I doubt not, my dear friend, but you have found substantial happiness. I expect to find you something of an altered, but not a different, man: the wild, bold, generous young fellow composed into the steady, affectionate husband, and the fond, careful parent. For me, I am just the same Will-o'-wisp being I used to be. About the first and fourth quarters of the moon, I generally set in for the trade wind of wisdom; but about the full and change, I am the luckless victim of mad tornadoes, which blow me into chaos. Almighty love still reigns and revels in my bosom; and I am at this moment ready to hang myself for a young Edinburgh widow, who has wit and wisdom more murderously fatal than the assassinating stiletto of the Sicilian bandit, or the poisoned arrow of a savage African. My Highland dirk, that used to hang beside my crutches, I have gravely removed into a neighbouring closet, the key of which I cannot command, in case of spring-tide paroxysms. You may guess of her wit by the following verses, which she has sent me the other day.

My best compliments to our friend Allan. Adieu!

R. B.

The letters of Lord Byron evince, even better than his poems, his command of vigorous English, while they also display his perplexing mixture of good and evil, his glory and his condemnation. The following is characteristic:



NEWSTEAD ABBEY. Sept. 20, 1814.

Here's to her who long  
Hath waked the poet's sigh!  
The girl who gave to song  
What gold could never buy.

My dear Moore, I am going to be married—that is, I am accepted, and one usually hopes the rest will follow. My mother of the Gracchi (that *are* to be) *you* think too straight-laced for me, although the paragon of only children, and invested with ‘golden opinions of all sorts of men,’ and full of ‘most blessed conditions’ as Desdemona herself. Miss Milbanke is the lady, and I have her father's invitation to proceed there in my elect capacity,—which, however, I cannot do till I have settled some business in London, and got a blue coat.

She is said to be an heiress, but of that I really know nothing certainly, and shall not inquire. But I do know that she has talents and excellent qualities, and you will not deny her judgment, after having refused six suitors and taken me. Now, if you have anything to say against this, pray do: my mind's made up, positively fixed, determined, and therefore I will listen to reason, because now it can do no harm. Things may occur to break it off, but I will hope not. In the meantime, I tell you (*a secret*, by-the-by,—at least, till I know she wishes it to be public) that I have proposed and am accepted. You need not be in a hurry to wish me joy, for we mayn't be married for months. I am going to town to-morrow; but expect to be here, on my way there, within a fortnight.

If this had not happened, I should have gone to Italy. In my way down, perhaps, you will meet me at Nottingham, and come over with me here. I need not say that nothing will give me greater pleasure. I must, of course, reform thoroughly; and, seriously, if I can contribute to her happiness, I shall secure my own. She is so good a person, that—that—in short, I wish I was a better.

Ever, etc.

Contemporary with Pope, the centre of an admiring circle, ‘the glass of fashion and the mould of form,’ lived the celebrated Miss Pierrepont, better known under the name and title of Lady Mary Wortley Montague; a woman of cultivated intellect, good-natured wit, lively in

description, clever and amusing in gossip, able when in earnest, to throw maxims of common sense and worldly wisdom into plain, forceful words; yet, withal, too masculine, writing out of the clearness of the head rather than the abundance of the heart.

Walpole's letters — three thousand or more in number — would be worth more if two-thirds of them had been destroyed. We can only mention the full, clear, kindly Southey, the genial Sir Walter Scott, the grotesquely humorous Charles Lamb, the droll Sidney Smith, the pen of Hood, dipped alike 'in the springs of laughter and the sources of tears.' The list of these might be supplemented by the names of many others, lately passed away, or living, whose correspondence, priceless to its direct recipients, would find its value justly estimated by posterity.

Of course, a letter should be properly dated, addressed, signed, and superscribed; should be legible, grammatical, and perspicuous; properly keyed, and correct, but unaffected. Let a clear head dictate the promptings of a free heart. When most careless and confidential, remember the sentiments of Landor: 'I think it as improper and indecorous to write a stupid or a silly note to you, as one in a bad hand or on coarse paper. *Familiarity ought to have a worse name, if it relaxes in its attentiveness to please.*' Howell's conception of the epistolary style is excellent:

It was a quaint difference the ancients did put betwixt a letter and an oration; that the one should be attired like a woman, the other like a man. The latter of the two is allowed large side-ropes, as long periods, parentheses, similes, examples, and other parts of rhetorical flourishes: but a letter or epistle should be short-coated and closely crouched; a hungerskin becomes a letter more handsomely than a gown. Indeed we should write as we speak, and that is a true and familiar letter which expresseth one's mind, as if he were discoursing with the party to whom he writes in succinct and

short terms. The tongue and the pen are both of them interpreters of the mind; but I hold the pen to be the more faithful of the two. The tongue *in udo posita*, being seated in a most slippery place, may fail and falter in her sudden extemporal expressions, but the pen, having a greater advantage of premeditation, is not so subject to error, and leaves things behind it upon firm and authentic record.

It might not be straining a point to say that the best letter-writers are either women, or else men having some more or less feminine traits. 'Would you desire at this day,' says De Quincey, 'to read our noble language in its native beauty, picturesque form, idiomatic propriety, rich in its phraseology, delicate yet sinewy in its composition — steal the mail-bags, and break open all the letters in female handwriting. Three out of four will have been written by that class of women who have the most leisure and the most interest in a correspondent by the post — that class who combine more of intelligence, cultivation, and thoughtfulness, than any other in Europe — the class of unmarried women above twenty-five.'

## CHAPTER XVII.

### DEPARTMENTS OF EXPRESSION—ESSAY.

To write just treatises requireth time in the writer, and leisure in the reader, which is the cause which hath made me choose to write certain brief notes, set down rather significantly than curiously, which I have called essays.—**LORD BACON.**

The essay writer is the lay preacher upon that vague mass of doctrine which we dignify by the name of knowledge of life or of human nature.—**CORNHILL MAGAZINE.**

IT is the province of some to spread out a subject in all its breadth and variety; of others, to touch upon many subjects, but to exhaust none. These gleaners in the field of thought have swelled the volume of our literature with a class of productions known as *essays*. The term literally signifies an attempt, a trial, or endeavor. It was in this sense that Locke modestly styled his great work an '*Essay* on the Human Understanding.' Before him, Bacon had dedicated to the elder brother of Charles I a collection of short formal pieces on life and manners, which he chose to call *Essays*. Compact and pithy, inexhaustible in aliment, and rich in imagery, they remain the originals and still the models of the severer and stater essay writing. 'These, of all my works,' he said, 'have been most current, for that, as it seems, they come home to men's businesse and bosomes.' Fifty years later, Cowley further recommended this kind of composition by his agreeable speculations in moral and social science. Temple and Shaftesbury are principally known by this species of effort. Then came the celebrated essayists, Steele, Addison, Johnson, Goldsmith, and others. The

manner in which these essays were given to the world, on separate sheets — *Tatler*, *Spectator*, *Rambler*, and similar papers — at intervals of five days, distinguished them from everything of the kind that had preceded, and was a great cause of their almost incredible popularity. They were peculiar, too, in the circumstance of being suggested by the vices and fashionable follies of the day. The end was moral health; and thus sermons, veiled in pleasantry, light, graceful, and fastidious, were preached on every conceivable text, from the brevity of life to the extravagance of female toilets. To them, especially to Addison, must be referred the introduction of a polite taste for letters. Their success induced a crowd of followers, whose influence, in the aggregate, did much to reduce our language to grammatical correctness and rhetorical force.

Under the auspices of a confederacy of men of wit and learning in the early part of the present century, essay writing assumed a new phase. We allude to the foundation of the Reviews and Magazines, — *Edinburgh*, *London Quarterly*, *North American*, *Blackwood's*, *Westminster*, all of which became the exemplars of numerous similar publications. The primary object of most was to furnish thorough criticisms of books and careful papers on the current topics of politics and reform. As their scope enlarged, contributions were received on any subject to which the writer had devoted special attention. Their limits and popular purpose required that the articles should be condensed and spirited. Hence a peculiar style — brief, pithy, trenchant, often eloquent, but always positive. The master spirits were Jeffrey, Sidney Smith, Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey, and Macaulay.

Meanwhile Irving's *Sketch Book* appeared, forming in America an epoch in this kind of literature; of the same generic character as Addison's essays, but with important specific peculiarities. The former have a direct moral

purpose; the latter seek only to delight, and are founded on sentiment.

With one or another modification, the chief of which are editorials, criticisms, reviews, and dissertations, the essay has latterly absorbed an enormous amount of the productive energy of mind on both sides of the Atlantic. Indeed, the number of essayists is almost identical with the number of writers. A few, like Emerson and Whipple, have limited their writings to essays; the most are also, like Arnold, Froude, Stedman, and Lowell, historians, biographers, poets, and so forth. Usually they are (at least for the time) contributors to the periodical press, who naturally seek to rescue their work from that forgetfulness which inevitably overwhelms such a form of publication.

Generally speaking, then, the essay should have one capital idea, one prominent fact or thought to state, error to controvert, or end to accomplish. Its style may vary from the simple and colloquial to the most condensed and profound, admitting wit, humor, ornament, and illustration, to give point, interest, and lucidity.

In its literary-critical function, let us add, the essay should display cultivated taste, full knowledge, sympathy, candor, freedom from prepossessions, readiness to recognize merit, absence of any personal motive whatever. That love for vivacity which aspires to an entertaining article, and begets in the victim a rankling sense of insult, a friend will find it hard to defend. The first purpose of criticism is by no means to amuse or entertain, but to teach and discipline. It should be stimulating and corrective; with the public, insisting on correctness of opinion; with the author, on correctness of sense and expression, by the impartial application of those tests which have been generalized from the practice of the masters of literature; endeavoring to see things as they really are,

and so exposing pretence and incompetence only to discover and foster excellence; adducing reasons for admiration, justifying censure by argument and example. The critic's duty lies between indiscriminate praise and indiscriminate blame. To go to either extreme is probably to decide against the voice of the public. Works puffed into undeserved notoriety have sunk to oblivion, while others strongly condemned, doomed, it may be, to a season of neglect, have achieved lasting popularity. It was the lashing, hasty, capricious, self-revealing character of much criticism that led Mr. Lewes to write, 'The good effected by criticism is small, the evil incalculable'; and Dr. Holland: 'There has not lived a great British author within the last century whose works have not been subjected to the most scorching criticisms and the most slashing and sweeping condemnations. Yet those criticisms and condemnations have passed for nothing. The criticisms, often profoundly ingenious, and full of learning and power, die, and the books live. They are often exceedingly creditable productions—so creditable, indeed, that they form the basis of great personal reputations—but they accomplish absolutely nothing except the revelation of the men who produce them.'

Worthy exemplifications of the higher, wider, more earnest criticism may be found in Vaughan's *Hours with the Mystics*, Shairp's *Aspects of Poetry*, Arnold's *Essays in Criticism*, Froude's *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, and Stedman's *Victorian Poets*; but English literature, it would seem, has yet to be enriched with a true and sufficient realization of Pope's ideal critic:

But where's the man who counsel can bestow,  
Still pleased to teach, and yet not proud to know?  
Unbiass'd, or by favor, or by spite;  
Not dully prepossessed, nor blindly right;

Though learn'd, well-bred; and, though well-bred, sincere;  
Modestly bold and humanly severe;  
Who to a friend his faults can freely show;  
And gladly praise the merit of a foe;  
Blest with a taste exact yet unconfined;  
A knowledge both of books and human kind;  
Generous converse; a soul exempt from pride;  
And love to praise, with reason on his side?



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### DEPARTMENTS OF EXPRESSION—HISTORY.

In history a great volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials for future wisdom from the errors and infirmities of mankind.—BURKE.

History, at least in its state of ideal perfection, is a compound of poetry and philosophy. It impresses general truths on the mind by a vivid representation of particular characters and incidents.—MACAULAY.

THE rendering of facts under the relation of place is, as we have seen, description; under the relation of time, narrative. History rests chiefly on the latter. Its method is developed by successive stages. At first reflecting the prevalent appetite for the marvellous, it was indiscriminating, rejected nothing, mixed fable with truth, recounted omens, prodigies, legends, with the same grave minuteness as events of daily life, worshipped antiquity, began with the creation of Adam, and reached home by filling the chasms with tradition and fancy. Thus in 1483 the pedigree of the London bishops was traced back to the alleged migration of Brutus from Troy, and even to Noah. Geoffrey's *History of the Britons*, composed in 1147, relates how Brutus, having slain the giants who peopled England, built London; how, during a succeeding government, it rained blood three consecutive days; how the coasts were infested by a horrid sea monster, which, having devoured multitudes, swallowed the reigning king; how a giant more terrible than the others, clothed himself in furs made entirely from the beards of kings he had killed, but fell himself a victim to the prowess of Arthur. The reputation of this work procured for its

author a bishopric, and for several centuries but two or three critics ventured to question its accuracy.

Others, less comprehensive but equally credulous, would give us a diary of passing experience, a kind of historical almanac, noting in the same lifeless tone the important and the trivial. These are the annalists or chroniclers. Here is their style in the tenth century:

538. When he had reigned four years, the sun was eclipsed from the first hour of the day to the third.

540. Again, two years after, the sun was eclipsed for half an hour after the third hour, so that the stars were everywhere visible in the sky.

661. After three years, Kenwalk again fought a battle near the town of Pontesbury, and took prisoner Wulfhere, son of Penda, at Ashtown, when he had defeated his army.

671. After one year more, there was a great pestilence among the birds, so that there was an intolerable stench by sea and land, arising from the carcasses of birds both small and great.

674. After one year, Wulfhere, son of Penda, and Kenwalk fought a battle among themselves in a place called Bedwin.

677. After three years a comet was seen.

729. At the end of one year a comet appeared, and the holy bishop Egbert died.

733. Two years after these things, king Ethelbald received under his dominion the royal vill which is called Somerton. The same year the sun was eclipsed.

734. After the lapse of one year, the moon appeared as if stained with spots of blood, and by the same omen Tatwine and Bede departed this life.

In the sixteenth century there is a like uncritical habit, with a similar readiness of belief. The narrator, as usual, begins with Paradise, and continues to the date of publication. Holinshed, the most complete of chroniclers, vouches for the arrival of Ulysses in Britain, and speaks of 'a bloody rain, the red drops falling on the sheets which had been hanged to dry.'

Of history, that reproduces the unity and drift of events by the motion and chain of ideas, exhibiting the orderly progress of society and the nature of man, Raleigh's *History of the World* (1641), though full of that sort of learning which now provokes only an incredulous smile, may be said to signalize the beginning.

Under the shaping genius of Hume, Gibbon, and Macaulay, history became more exact and organic, as well as more humane and democratic. The fortunes of princes and the issues of campaigns became of less moment than a knowledge of how the people actually lived—the external picture of objects and the internal picture of soul—the summing up of facts in general ideas for the guidance of the legislator, the political economist, and the student of human destiny.

The present age discloses, with more or less distinctness, three schools of historians—the imaginative or romantic, which makes the most lavish effort to resuscitate the past, to depict it vividly, dramatically; the realistic, which, simpler and severer, aims to exhibit men and things merely as they were; and the philosophic, which, using particulars for generalization, seeks to show that historical phenomena have a system and a sequence, determined by natural laws. To the first belong the sinister and furious Carlyle,<sup>1</sup> the more popular and paradoxical Froude;<sup>2</sup> to the second, the calm and scholarly Freeman,<sup>3</sup> the spirited and artistic Green;<sup>4</sup> to the third, the learned and ambitious Buckle,<sup>5</sup> the careful and comprehensive Lecky.<sup>6</sup>

From all this, it appears that history is to be considered

<sup>1</sup> *Cromwell. The French Revolution.*

<sup>2</sup> *England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth.*

<sup>3</sup> *The Norman Conquest. Conquest of the Saracens. Federal Government. Old English History.*

<sup>4</sup> *A Short History of the English People. The Making of England.*

<sup>5</sup> *Civilization in England.*

<sup>6</sup> *Rationalism. European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne. England in the Eighteenth Century.*

under two aspects, the scientific and the poetic. Under the first, commencing with the environment, it delineates the industrial, political, domestic, social, moral, religious, literary, and æsthetic existence; observing the chronological order subordinately, the logical principally; displaying events in their causal connection and dependence; setting forth by iteration, example, and illustration, general views concerning men, nations, institutions, and movements of parties, judge as well as witness, distributing praise and blame; addressing itself to the higher emotions not less than to the understanding. Says Froude, alluding to its vocation:

The history of this, as of all nations (or so much of it as there is occasion for any of us to know), is the history of the battles which it has fought and won with evil; not with political evil merely, or spiritual evil; but with all manifestations whatsoever of the devil's power. . . .

We learn in it to sympathize with what is great and good; we learn to hate what is base. In the anomalies of fortune we feel the mystery of our mortal existence; and in the companionship of the illustrious natures who have shaped the fortunes of the world, we escape from the littlenesses which cling to the round of common life, and our minds are tuned in a higher and nobler key.

Under the second, it is constructed with a view to local color, dramatic situations, effective contrasts; and is marked by a stirring, elevated diction. Thus has the reader 'the pleasure of foreseeing somewhat of the sequel without confusion; he observes always one event rising out of another, and longs to see the winding up of the whole, which is artfully concealed from him, to hasten him on to it with the greater impatience. When he has perused the whole history, he looks back like a curious traveler, who, having got to the top of a mountain, observes all around him, and takes a delight in viewing from this situation the way he came and all the pleasant

places through which he passed.'<sup>1</sup> The historian's qualifications may be summed up in the words of Bayle: 'His learning should be greater than his genius, and his judgment stronger than his imagination. In private life he should have the character of being free from party; and his former writings ought always to have shown the sincerest attachment to truth. I ask several questions: who the historian is? of what country? of what principles? For it is impossible but that his private opinions will almost involuntarily work themselves into his public performances. His style, also, should be clear, elegant, and nervous.'

Evidently, much of what has been said is applicable to that branch of history which deals with the characters and important events in the lives of individuals—*biography*. 'A Biography professes to give the experience of a life, and may therefore bring to view and illustrate important truths respecting man's physical and mental nature. The examples presented to us in the lives of prominent men and women may have various bearings. They may instruct us how to preserve health (see, for instance, George Combe's *Life of Andrew Combe*), to attain knowledge and culture (the *Lives of Philosophers, Scholars, Poets, etc.*), to play a part in public affairs, to prosper in business, to regulate our families, or to do good in our generation. Most commonly, Biography gratifies our interest in some distinguished person, and is the more acceptable, the more it is invested with the colors and touches of poetry.'

Othello's request before his suicide is the just rule of the biographer:

I pray you, in your letters,  
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,  
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,  
Nor set down aught in malice.

<sup>1</sup> Fénelon.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### DEPARTMENTS OF EXPRESSION—SCIENCE.

Science is, I believe, nothing but trained and organized common sense.—**HUXLEY.**

Science corrects the old creeds, sweeps away with every new perception, our infantile catechisms, and necessitates a faith commensurate with the grander orbits and universal laws which it discloses.—**EMERSON.**

**I**F history be defined, in the narrower sense, as the narration of a consecutive series of phenomena in time, or the description of a coexistent series of phenomena in space, the information thus received,—that certain phenomena are or have been, may be called historical or empirical—the latter because given by experience or observation, and not obtained as the result of inference or reasoning. But the knowledge of a phenomenon as a mere fact, as a mere isolated event, does not content us. The constitution of our mind compels us to suppose a cause—to connect the objects of our experience with others which afford the reasons of their existence, and (because we are lost in the multitude of details) to assort them in classes, to reduce the many to the one, the infinity of nature to the finitude of mind, to tend ever upward from particular facts to general laws, from general laws to universal principles. This knowledge of the why or how, this generalized knowledge, is called scientific, philosophical, or rational.

As generalities, current maxims have something of the reality of science, though too little tested and too loosely worded to deserve its name. They are reached by the same process, but less rigorously; and receive the same

expository handling as the most precise doctrines of physics or metaphysics. Says Professor Huxley:

The vast results obtained by science are won by no mystical faculties, by no mental processes, other than those which are practiced by every one of us in the humblest and meanest affairs of life. A detective policeman discovers a burglar from the marks made by his shoe, by a mental process identical with that by which Cuvier restored the extinct animals of Montmartre from fragments of their bones. Nor does that process of induction and deduction by which a lady, finding a stain of a particular kind upon her dress, concludes that somebody has upset the inkstand thereon, differ in any way from that by which Adams and Leverrier discovered a new planet. The man of science, in fact, simply uses with scrupulous exactness the methods which we all habitually and at every moment use carelessly.

Scientific discourse being addressed principally to the understanding, its formal requirements are clearness, completeness, certainty, and method.

Obviously, the power shrewdly and competently to take to pieces or to observe parts, and the power to group together and see how all the parts are related to one great whole, are possessed by comparatively few, and cannot be expected from the first efforts of intelligence, either of individuals or of nations. As late as the fifteenth century, an Oxford Catechism asked, 'What is the substance of which Adam, the first man, was made?' and the answer was:

I tell thee of eight pounds by weight.

Tell me what they are called.

I tell thee the first was a pound of earth, of which his flesh was made; the second was a pound of fire, whence his blood came, red and hot; the third was a pound of wind, and thence his breathing was given to him; the fourth was a pound of welkin, thence was his unsteadiness of mood given him; the fifth was a pound of grace, whence was given him his growth; the sixth was a pound of blossoms, whence was given him the variety of his eyes; and seventh was a pound of dew, whence he got his sweat; the eighth was a pound of salt, and thence were his tears salt.

It was not until the seventeenth century that a new epoch was determined, for us, by the genius of Bacon, who proclaimed that, for the attainment of scientific knowledge, it is necessary to observe with care—that is, to analyze; to reject every element as hypothetical which this analysis does not spontaneously afford; to call in experiment in the aid of observation; and to attempt no synthesis or generalization until the relative analysis has been completely accomplished.

At present, perhaps the distinguishing characteristic of the age is, that it draws, far more largely than heretofore, upon experiment as a means of arriving at truth, while the knowledge thus acquired is applied to art and investigation with a freedom and boldness hitherto unknown. The innovations thus made upon other modes of thought are without parallel. New direction has been given to inquiry and aspiration. Gifted intellects have been diverted from poetry—from the search for the ideal, to the search for the real. We have seen how profoundly historical method has been influenced by the conception of order. Metaphysicians study the nervous system, and speak of the 'dynamics' of mind. All departments have the scientific coloring,—the widened survey of man and of nature.

Though we have used the word *philosophical* in its widest acceptance, as synonymous with *scientific*, the knowledge of *mind* in whatever aspect, is denominated philosophy by preëminence. The one is essentially external, the other essentially interior. But, as before remarked, the scientific method—the method first and specially applicable to the study of matter—powerfully affects every department of thought. Theories of mental processes which despise or ignore the disclosures of physiology and natural history, cannot hope to receive favor. The mistake—if regret may be expressed—is in making



physiological investigation the sole or chief guide. All its achievements have only illuminated the old statement that soul and body are here intimately related. 'The problem of the connection of soul and body,' says Tyn-dall, 'is as insolvable in its modern form as it was in the pre-scientific ages.' No light has been shed upon the arcana of intellect and volition; nor can there be, by exclusive approaches from the outside. No sage of physical wisdom can bring word of solace or vision of peace to the troubled and weary who ask:

'Canst thou not minister to a *mind* diseased,  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,  
And by some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of the perilous stuff  
Which weighs upon the heart?'

To produce scientific works that shall be classed among literary productions, there must be added to a mastery of the subject a mastery of language that is equally rare. Few writers succeed in so far liberating science from the burden of technicality, and, by the various arts that can impress ideas, imparting to their material that quality which we call 'readableness,' as to merit and ensure, for the presentation, a high place in literature. In general, writings of this species are more valued for their content than for their literary character. The following passage from Darwin will serve as an illustration of the attempt (which, from the nature of the matter, can never be more than partially successful) to combine poetic interest with instruction in the expositions of science:

It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent upon each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around

us. These laws, taken in the largest sense, bring growth with reproduction; inheritance, which is almost implied by reproduction; variability from the indirect and direct action of the conditions of life, and from use and disuse; a ratio of increase so high as to lead to a struggle for life, and as a consequence to natural selection, entailing divergence of character and the extinction of less-improved forms. Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving — namely, the production of the higher animals — directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed laws of gravity, from so simple a beginning, endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been and are being evolved.

## CHAPTER XX.

### DEPARTMENTS OF EXPRESSION — FICTION.

Lessons of wisdom have never such power over us as when they are wrought into the heart through the groundwork of a story which engages the passions.—  
STERNE.

I suppose as long as novels last and authors aim at interesting their public, there must always be in the story a virtuous and gallant hero; a wicked monster, his opposite; and a pretty girl, who finds a champion. Bravery and virtue conquer beauty; and vice, after seeming to triumph through a certain number of pages, is sure to be discomfited in the last volume, when justice overtakes him, and honest folks come by their own.—THACKERAY.

YOU all have observed and experienced a child's eager love of story. The stronger the coloring, the keener the relish; for childhood is the period of wide-awake fancy, of wonder and enthusiasm. In a rude state of society, where men are but children with a greater variety of ideas, this temperament exists in its highest perfection. The barbarian is fascinated by the incomprehensible. Unable to assign, for a natural phenomenon, a cause within nature, he has recourse to a living personality enshrined in it. To every grotto he gives a genius; to every tree, river, spring, a divinity. Out of the darkness he cannot tell what alarming spectre may emerge. Everywhere he is a believer in sorcery, witchcraft, enchantment. In a more advanced stage of development, he conceives a number of personal beings distinct from the material creation, which preside over the different provinces of nature — the sea, the air, the winds, the streams, the heavens — and assume the guardianship of individuals, tribes, and nations. Remembering this tendency for personification which marks the early life of man, his necessity

of referring effects to their causes, and his interpretation of things according to outward appearances, we shall better understand how the Hours, the Dawn, and the Night, with her black mantle bespangled with stars, came to receive their forms; how the clouds were sacred cattle driven to their milking, or sheep of the golden fleece; how the fall of the dew was the shedding of divine tears, and the fatal sun-shafts the arrows of Apollo shot from his golden bow; how the west, where the sun and stars go down, was the portal of descent to hell, and the morning twilight a reflection from the Elysian fields. Then, too, a similarity of imagery will exist wherever there exists a resemblance in the objects calling it forth; and a multitude of the symbols thus brought into circulation will be found recurring, like the primitive roots of a language, in almost every country, as common property inherited by descent. Every one, of Aryan blood, knows that the moon is inhabited by a man with a bundle of sticks on his back, exiled thither many centuries, and so far away that he is beyond the reach of death. From the remotest period, the rod has been employed in divination; in Bohemia, in Scotland, in Switzerland, in Iceland, in North America, is the story of some Rip Van Winkle who slumbers while years or ages glide by like a watch in the night; and of that great mystery of human life which is an enigma never solved, and ever originating speculation, is born the myth of the Wandering Jew. Consider, again, how incidents change by distance, and we by age. How a thing grows in memory when love or hate is there to idealize it!

Such is the foundation of fiction in general; originating as a whole from no single point as to country or to time, but in part springing from common causes, and in part travelling from region to region on airy wing, scattering the seeds of its wild flowers imperceptibly over the world; its radical types amplified and compounded to meet the

demands of new occasions, transferred from one subject to another, and embellished according to the taste, temper, and resources of the artist. Thus, the Macedonian conqueror and his contemporaries are accoutred in the garb of feudalism, and his wars transformed into chivalrous adventures. The Naiads of Greece differ only in name from the Nixen of Germany; and the Norwegian Thor is brother to Olympian Jove. The Persian Goblet of the Sun reappears as the Horn of the Celtic Bran, producing whatever liquor is called for; or as the Saint Graal of the Round Table—for which is reserved the 'Seat Perilous'—the miraculous cup, the giver of sumptuous banquets, the healer of maladies, to the pure the interpreter of the will of Heaven. The magic ship of Odin, which could be folded like a handkerchief, becomes, under the play of Homeric fancy, self-directing and prophetic:

So shalt thou instant reach the realm assign'd,  
In wondrous ships, self-moved, instinct with mind:  
No helm secures their course, no pilot guides;  
Like men intelligent, they plough the tides,  
Conscious of every coast and every bay  
That lies beneath the sun's alluring ray.

The story of Jack and Jill is a venerable one in Icelandic mythology, and Jack and the Beanstalk has found eager listeners in Africa, as in every quarter of Europe. All the machinery of the *Iliad* is reproduced in the legend of Charlemagne; and if in his case myth were not controlled and rectified by history, he would be for us, under his adventitious ornaments, as unreal as Agamemnon.

So it comes that the popular literature of the Dark and Middle Ages was a tissue of vision and mystery, of brilliancy and marvel, of furious and raving figures—tales of dimly remembered kings, of wonderful heroes and heroines, mixed up in kaleidoscopic fashion with elves, fairies, dwarfs, giants, dragons, enchanter's spells, and charms.

Written in the Roman or Romance dialects—principally in French and Italian—such narratives, displaying a world with little resemblance to that in which we dwell, received the name of *romances*.

Even after Chaucer (1328–1400), the romance of chivalry, with its giants, enchantments, tournaments, and thrilling adventures of heroic knights, loosening itself from the restraints of verse, continued popular in its prose form. To this, in the sixteenth century, were added facetious, strongly seasoned, home-made stories of real life, and political allegories like More's *Utopia*. In 1593 the English language received not only its first sustained and scholarly prose fiction, but also one of the earliest specimens of its capacity for refined and artistic prose of any kind, in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, the most memorable characteristics of which are a high tone of ideality, and the restriction of incidents within the poetic possibilities of truth; a tale of two ideal shepherds who love an ideal shepherdess in the midst of ideal scenes; a piece of prose-poetry, 'for, though it observeth not numbers and rhyme, yet the invention is wholly spun out of the phansie, but conformable to the possibilitie of truth in all particulars.' Then came, to imprint itself lastingly on the national memory, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, a religious allegory, based on the old notion of the Christian life as a warfare and a journey—a journey, as it unfolds in the rapt tinker's mind, from the wicket-gate seen afar over the fields under the Shining Light, on by the straight, undeviating road itself, with all its sights and perils, and through the Enchanted Ground and the pleasant land of Beulah, to the black and bridgeless river, by whose waters is the passage to the glimmering realms, and the brightness of the Heavenly City.

Passing over the fair, warm-blooded Mrs. Aphra Behn, who died in 1689, having embodied, in such fictions as the

*Fair Jilt*, the spirit of French and Italian gallantry, we come to Swift and Defoe, who—the one in *Gulliver's Travels*, the other in *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*—grasped contemporary life, and occupied themselves with the daily forms of human interest. In 1740 Richardson published *Pamela*, a history of English domestic life, and therefore a still nearer approach to the modern conception of the Novel. Friends who knew his talent for letter-writing asked him (then fifty-one years of age, and undistinguished except as a careful man of business) to write 'a little book of familiar letters on the useful concerns of common life.' On setting himself to comply with their request, it occurred to him, he says, that if he wrote a *story* in an easy and natural manner, he 'might possibly introduce a new species of writing that might possibly turn young people into a course of reading different from the pomp and parade of romance writing, and, dismissing the improbable and marvellous, with which novels generally abound, might tend to promote the cause of religion and virtue.' In the hands of Scott, who in 1814, as the author of *Waverley*, burst on the novel-reading public 'like a meteor among the smaller stars,' this sort of composition, acquiring a historical tendency and assuming a higher dignity, is made to blend the interest of romantic adventure with that of homely and humorous representation of manners. Before and around the *Waverley* were the *Caleb Williams* of Godwin, the *Persuasion* of Miss Austen, the *Scottish Chiefs* of Miss Porter, and, in particular, the Irish tales of Miss Edgeworth—all of which are directed in one way or another to utility, all seeking the amelioration of man, all realistic and moral. To-day, fiction is that form of literature which, next to the newspaper, has the widest popular influence, and is most characteristic of the period. Distributed among all classes by ten thousand agencies—

publishing houses, Sunday-school libraries, magazines, weeklies, and dailies — it may be said to be the daily food, for good or evil, of the civilized world.

To sum up, we have seen the germs of fiction existing everywhere in the earliest ages, and expanding into the verse or prose of feudalism and chivalry as naturally as the grass grows upon the surface of the soil. We have seen it pass beyond the romantic into the realistic development, as an advancing society demanded more and more the narration of what is probable under the laws of poetic justice. With little cultivation from Chaucer to Queen Anne, we have seen it undergo a revolution in the hands of observers and moralists, becoming in De Foe and Richardson the novel of *character*, holding the mirror up to Nature, and aiming to elevate while it informed the mind. To which may be added the distinctions hitherto expressed or implied, that if the interest turns on supernatural, improbable, or marvellous incidents, the story is called a *romance*; if on pictures of life, showing the web and texture of society as it really exists, or has existed, it is called a *novel*. If the novel re-creates the events and characters of history, putting us into living contact with a given phase of national life, it is *historical*; if it paints human nature and facts with a moral effect or design, it is *ethical*.

The first thing for the critic, as for the novelist, is to fix on the aim, the total meaning, the central idea — the status, or *motif*. Is this slight and temporary, or is it noble, large, and enduring? The general conception or intention is as the spine of a human being or the trunk of a tree. 'Yet as nature never leaves either bare, but clothes them with muscle and flesh, branches and foliage, so this leading idea of his book will be by the true author so successfully disguised or covered as not to obtrude itself objectionably; indeed, the ordinary reader ought



not even to suspect its existence. Yet from it, this one principal idea, proceed all aftergrowths; the kind of plot which shall best develop it, the characters which must act it out, the incidents which will express these characters, even to the conversations which involve and describe these incidents, all are sequences, following one another in natural order; even as from the seed-germ result successively the trunk, limbs, branches, twigs, and leafage of a tree.'

On the invention of *incidents* depends what is called the construction, the interest, of the plot. 'True merit in this particular,' says Professor Masson, 'will be found to be a detailed form of that merit which consists in the general creation of the story—the so-called incidents being events more or less consistent with the idea of that mimic world, whether meant as a facsimile of the real, or as an imaginary variation from it, which the author had in view from the first.' It should be added, that a romance, like Keats' *Endymion* or Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, has the liberty of improbable incident in an improbable world; but in the novel, which is a picture of life designed to impress people as life-like, the fantastic is its condemnation. It may present any series of events, in consistency with its purpose, but may not violate offensively the probabilities familiar to the reader's experience.

Much of the interest of his work depends on the novelist's power of description—his faculty in the imagination of scenery; but it is by his characters that he is chiefly judged. These should be natural, distinct, and well supported, the minor setting off the greater. In their appearance, feelings, dispositions, modes of thought, speech, and action, you shall see how deeply, how accurately he has studied life; how truly, minutely he represents it, and whether, after such study, he is a loving, loyal member of society, or a rebel, a cynic, 'a son of the

wilderness'; whether, and how far, he reflects the several existing tendencies of his art — a wider and more persevering realism (a closer rendering of life as it is), more of doctrinal and didactic earnestness, and a nobler idealization.

It is idle to speak of the novelist as only a spectator, limiting himself to the mere function of representing what he sees. There must be a meaning, an end, the subserviency of parts to a whole. The very choice of such and such facts, to the exclusion of others, involves preference, purpose. 'When we would philosophize,' says Aristotle, 'we philosophize; when we refuse to philosophize, then also in that very thing we philosophize; always and necessarily we do philosophize.' There is evidently room, however, for large gradation in this respect. It is not meant, of course, that the novel should be a polemical tirade, and thus serve the purpose of a pamphlet. 'A fiction,' says Bulwer, 'which is designed to inculcate an object wholly alien to the imagination, sins against the first law of art; and if a writer of fiction narrows his scope to particulars so positive as polemical controversy in matters ecclesiastical, political, or moral, his work may or may not be an able treatise, but it must be a very poor novel.' Directly or indirectly, but ever consciously, the true artist does and ever must teach a moral lesson. The most realistic writer, if he write worthily, must, with all his devotion to the real, protest, implicitly or explicitly, against the actual; and of two writers of equal power, he will exert the widest, most permanent, most healthful influence, who passes beyond the province of the mere minister to intellectual pleasure, and aims to develop, illustrate, and recommend a higher standard of thinking and living than that which the world, taken in the average, presents; bringing the mind, while he holds the mirror up to life, into the field of 'higher

possibilities, wherein objects shall be more glorious, and modes of action more transcendent, than any we see, and yet all shall seem in nature.'

Not to dwell on the merit or demerit of the literary style, there remains another matter to be taken into account. An effect cannot transcend the power of its cause. No artist, poet, or novelist, can be greater as such than he is as a *thinker*; and the final test of the worth of his labor, as of Shakespeare's dramas, is the worth of the philosophy that has entered into it through the medium and in the language of art, its wealth of wisdom, and the amount of valuable matter over and above the mere fiction or story. 'The very element in which the novelist works is human nature; yet what sort of Psychology have we in the ordinary run of novels? A Psychology, if the truth must be spoken, such as would not hold good in a world of imaginary cats, not to speak of men; impossible conformations of character; actions determined by motives that never could have determined the like; sudden conversions brought about by logical means of such astounding simplicity that wonder itself is paralyzed in contemplating them; chains of events defying all laws of conceivable causation! How shaky, also, the Political Economy and the Social Science of a good many of our novelists—sciences in the matter of which they must work, if not also in that of some of the physical sciences, in framing their fictitious histories! Before novels or poems can stand the inspection of that higher criticism which every literary work must be able to pass ere it can rank in the first class, their authors must be at least abreast of the best speculation of their time. Not that what we want from novelists and poets is further matter of speculation. What we want from them is matter of imagination; but the imagination of a well-furnished mind is one thing, and that of a vacuum is

another.'<sup>1</sup> In addition to their choral strain of moral piety, where, for instance, can be found in works of the same kind so rare a mine of thought, for the worshipper to take to his bosom, for the writer to enrich his discourse, for the thinker to ponder, for the divine to quote, for all to assimilate and use, as in those of George Eliot?

These remarks suggest the advantages of the novelist as a teacher. If historical, as Sir Walter Scott, he instructs us, with more or less fidelity, in the manners, customs, laws, beliefs, characters and events of the age in which the scenes are laid. As a critic or speculator, the doctrine he intends to convey, unlike that of the avowed instructor or declared reformer, is not clothed in abstract conceptions which, to be fully and clearly understood, require thoughtful reflection, but in concrete instances that come home at once to the feeblest comprehension.<sup>2</sup> If he be one of high order, he throws a beauty over what would else be vulgar and mean, yet brings virtue and vice into striking antithesis; helps to give a better insight into human character and actions, prompts our affections to the good, sharpens our antipathy to the bad; accomplishes all this while he provides a mode of pleasing relaxation. Not in the direct formation of this or that special opinion, but in subtle impressions upon the whole character, is his influence exercised most powerfully.

The imagination and fancy should not be cultivated too exclusively. Without a wise selection and regulation of intellectual food, there is danger of that mood in which action is renounced, resolve becomes nerveless, and the soul sinks into passivity. The condition of many a habitual and exclusive novel-reader might be likened not inaptly to that of the enervated companions of Ulysses,

<sup>1</sup> Masson's *British Novelists*.

<sup>2</sup> For this reason the wisest men in all ages have more or less employed fables as the vehicles of knowledge.

who, feeding upon the lotos, murmur, in luxuriant sleepiness:

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,  
With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
Falling asleep in a half dream.

It is never the nature of this species of composition, considered in itself, but the faulty manner of its make-up, that exposes it, as a rule, to reprobation. Pass by, we should say, mere love-and-marriage stories. Put far from you a thoroughly *bad* book — bad either for coarseness of style or for laxity of morals. Perhaps such as put forward licentiousness as licentiousness are less harmful than those in which poison is distilled so subtly that the evil is wrought almost before suspicion is awakened — in which right and wrong are muddled up together into a sort of neutral tint, in which characters are made attractive by their faults, and sin is quite forgotten in sympathy for the sinner — so piteous, so interesting, so beautiful !

## CHAPTER XXI.

### DEPARTMENTS OF EXPRESSION—ORATORY.

Eloquence is vehement simplicity.—**CÆCIL.**

He has oratory who ravishes his hearers while he forgets himself.—**LAVATER.**

Suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you overstep not the modesty of nature.—**SHAKESPEARE.**

IT has been said that an audience leaving the theatre in which a drama of Sophocles was performed, felt themselves inspired with the thoughts and conceptions of the poet, so were raised to the dignified standard of his nature and intellect; and that this beneficial effect manifested itself, not by issuance in visible acts, but rather by diffusion over the general tenor of their lives. On the other hand, an audience quitting the theatre in which Demosthenes thundered against Philip, associate, unite, arm, and march against the invader. In the one case, individuals are purified, elevated; in the other, they are rendered unanimous for purposes whose end is action.

The comparison suggests the prevailing and highest aim of the orator—to make himself master of our will. Hence the current definition of oratory—the art of persuading, impelling. But acts may be internal, results may be invisible. More specifically, more comprehensively, therefore, oratory is discourse delivered to an assembly with the view of inculcating certain ideas, impressing with certain sentiments, inducing certain resolves, or of doing these three at once.

The fuller statement is in accordance with the accepted

division of oratory into *secular* and *sacred*, and the subdivision of the former into *demonstrative*, whose proper business is the praise or dispraise of persons and things, as in panegyrics, invectives, gratulatory, funeral, and Fourth-of-July addresses; *deliberative* (sometimes called political), employed on questions affecting the public welfare, agitated in the halls of legislation or before mass meetings consulting on the adoption or rejection of measures; *judicial*, or *forensic*, employed in courts of law, seeking to determine the relation of the law to the fact, and to influence the decision of judges and juries, who have power to absolve or to condemn. Where men are convened for debate or consultation, the orator is one of the assembly, every member of which has equal right with himself to the expression of opinion. He, at least theoretically, is to think less of bringing a majority to his side than of ascertaining which side is the true one for all. He has also the excitement of responsibility, is aided by the animation and topical suggestiveness of controversy. In occasional addresses — not excluding the performances of my young friends on school and college commencement days — the speaker has to do essentially with spectators, who are at peace, who hear him on a subject not felt to be of pressing importance, who yet are to be interested. As a rule, he has wide range — can fetch his topics from a great variety of quarters. Before the bench, he is, or should be, a logician, showing what is just and true; he is in the presence of acknowledged superiors, who are to decide upon the strength of his reasoning; he is watched severely by those who have made such questions as he is discussing the serious study of their lives. Composed and compact, earnest but subdued, before the judge, he may be freer, even passionate; before the jury, he may steal away 'from the legal evidence and character of the act to its social effects and dramatic bearings.' His problem is to

escape the dulness of logic without falling into the impropriety of harangue. Before a congregation of worshippers, he is a preacher, endeavoring to influence man in his strictly personal life, not superficially and transiently, but profoundly and permanently. His appeal is not to carry a point connected with his own ambition or gains, but to advance their spiritual good. He regards his hearers in every relation and condition of life — as members of the family and subjects of the state, as laboring and professional, as poor and rich, as ignorant and enlightened. His themes are noble, important, sublime; he chooses them at leisure, and can premeditate carefully: but they are familiar, trite, abstract, forever recurring. Yet must he fix the attention. His difficult task is to overcome listlessness, indifference, inertia, and bestow on what is common the charm of novelty.

*Phil. Parker*

With these distinctions, we proceed to speak of the principles of eloquence in general. The chief stress is to be put upon matter and argument. Ideas must form the ground-work. 'A fine style,' says Buffon, 'is such only by the infinite number of truths which it presents.' 'In your arguments at the bar,' says Wirt to a young friend, '*let argument strongly predominate*. Sacrifice your flowers, and let your columns be Doric rather than Composite — the better medium is Ionic. Avoid, as you would the gates of death, the reputation of floridity.' 'In any knot of men conversing on any subject,' says Emerson, 'the person who knows most about it will have the ear of the company, if he wishes it, and lead the conversation — no matter what genius or distinction other men there present may have; and in any public assembly, him who has the facts, and can and will state them, people will listen to, though he is otherwise ignorant, though he is hoarse and ungraceful, though he stutters and screams.' 'The orator,' again, 'is thereby an orator,



that he keeps his feet ever on a fact. Thus only is he invincible. No gifts, no graces, no power of wit or learning or illustration will make any amends for want of this. All audiences are just to this point. Fame of voice or of rhetoric will carry people a few times to hear a speaker, but they soon begin to ask, "What is he driving at?" and if this man does not stand for anything, he will be deserted.' We do not walk with a sense of security in utter darkness. Without mastery of the subject, there can be no ease of movement, and movement in style should be of conquest, not of struggle.

The genius of all remarkable men is method. 'Every one who speaks will find it of the greatest advantage to himself to have previously arranged his thoughts, and classed under proper heads, in his own mind, what he is to deliver. This will assist his memory, and carry him through his discourse without that confusion to which one is every moment subject who has fixed no distinct plan of what he is to say. And with respect to the hearers, order in discourse is absolutely necessary for making any proper impression. It adds both force and light to what is said. It makes them accompany the speaker easily and readily, as he goes along; and makes them feel the full effect of every argument which he employs.' Discourse has its possible power only when the parts, intimately united, exactly adjusted, mutually aid and sustain one another, like the stones of an arch. As writers or speakers, without a strongly conceived plan you will be without inspiration; you grope, by turns advance and recede, hesitating, uncertain, mistaking gradations, confounding relations, throwing off sentences and paragraphs that follow one another but are not connected. How as to your audience? 'Decision,' says Vinet, 'cannot be conveyed to the soul of anyone by that which bears the tremulous impress of

indecision. Conceive of a discourse in which the chief laws of order are violated, in which an idea is abandoned before it has been thoroughly presented, unless it is reverted to afterward by cutting, perhaps, the thread of another idea; in which an accessory has as much place as a principal idea, perhaps more; in which the advance is not from the weaker to the stronger, but from the stronger to the weaker; in which nothing is grouped, nothing compacted; in which everything is scattered, wandering, incoherent; such a discourse is contrary to the nature of the human mind, to its just expectation, to its wants; in the soul of the hearer, as in the discourse which is addressed to him, everything begins, nothing is finished; the elements, which by combination would have formed a solid mass (I mean analogous, homogeneous sentiments), are kept separate and at a distance; instead of a bright and burning flame, we have a whirl of sparks; lively impressions, perhaps, are produced, but transient and soon effaced; and although none of the materials necessary to the composition of an excellent discourse may be wanting, no comparison can be made, as to the two-fold purpose of convincing and persuading, between the work of which we are speaking and another in which, perhaps, there are fewer ideas, but in which order renders everything availing.'

Order involves unity, which is essential to every work of art, art itself having as its chief aim to make a whole by combining scattered elements, by bringing all the parts into relation to one and the same centre. Order, as here propounded, supposes movement, whose first rule is continuity. This is broken when the soul is sought to be moved by formal division announced beforehand, by excessive subdivision, that perpetual cutting up of ideas which demands at every moment unseasonable halts; by every digression, by every excursion, that induces forget-

fulness of the supreme design. Oratory must keep doing, like the drama, with its plot always thickening, its incidents and its catastrophe. *Semper ad eventum festinat*<sup>1</sup> is the Horatian precept. A Chatham or a Webster husbands his resources until attention is fairly enchained, then sweeps his hearers on, never suffering their interest to flag—his eye ever on the goal, whose shadow covers the whole structure of his discourse from beginning to end.

Nature teaches the art of preparation and gradation—an art that we always connect with the idea of beauty. 'The beauty of the skies would be diminished by the absence of twilight and dawn.' Your visitor does not enter by the window. We have elsewhere urged that success often depends on the beginning; that from first impressions, good or bad, we do not easily recover. The exordium should be suggested by the subject, born of it, united to it, as the flower to the stem. 'In proportion,' says Dr. Bascom, 'as the subject is before the minds of all, and has secured the interest of all, does an introduction become short and unimportant, since the condition of sympathetic action is already present.'

It is almost too obvious to be said, that there should be, in the mind of the writer or speaker, a distinct view of the theme to be developed; and if the utility of the exordium is founded in the necessity of preparing the mind and disposing it favorably toward the special subject, it is idle to argue that the subject ought to be announced—or at least so clearly, so precisely understood that the hearer may direct his attention immediately, and without hesitation to a determinate point. Shall you also announce the plan? Do what you can in the way of omission, and strive so to construct your discourse that formal partition will seem unnecessary.

<sup>1</sup> Always hasten to the point.

Neither the intention of convincing the understanding nor the design of influencing the will should, as a rule, be declared. Pericles artfully claimed only the power of *explaining* the measures he proposed, and Antony studiously, cunningly conceals his purpose of stirring the Roman mob:

Bear with me;

My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar,  
And I must pause till it come back to me.  
O masters! if I were disposed to stir  
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,  
I should do Brutus wrong and Cassius wrong,  
Who, you all know, are honorable men:  
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose  
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,  
Than I will wrong such honorable men.

Says Whately:

Where the motives dwelt on are such as ought to be present, and strongly to operate, men are not likely to be pleased with the idea that they *need* to have these motives urged upon them, and they are not already sufficiently under the influence of such sentiments as the occasion calls for. A man may indeed be convinced that he is in such a predicament; and may ultimately feel obliged to the orator for exciting or strengthening such sentiments; but while he confesses this, he cannot but feel a degree of mortification in making the confession, and a kind of jealousy of the apparent assumption of superiority, in a speaker who seems to say, 'Now I will exhort you to feel as you ought on the occasion; I will endeavor to inspire you with such noble, and generous, and amiable sentiments as you ought to entertain'; which is, in effect, the tone of him who avows the purpose of exhortation. The mind is sure to revolt from the humiliation of being thus moulded and fashioned, in respect to its feelings, at the pleasure of another; and is apt, perversely, to resist the influence of such a discipline.

He who lays siege to the soul, as a fort to be taken, can never capture it unless he keeps himself informed of the interior of the place. He must be, like the most successful preachers, a considerate student of the condition of his audience, whether they be learned or ignorant, noble or vulgar, of this or that profession, etc. The phy-

sician cannot pronounce upon the wholesomeness of a medicine without knowing the state of the patient for whom it is intended. The less enlightened the hearers, the harder, of course, it is to make them comprehend a long and complex train of reasoning; so that sometimes the arguments, in themselves the most cogent, cannot be employed at all with effect; and the rest will need an expansion and copious illustration which would be needless, and therefore tiresome, before a different kind of audience: on the other hand, their feelings may be excited by much bolder and coarser expedients; such as those are the most ready to employ, and the most likely to succeed in, who are themselves but a little removed above the vulgar; as may be seen in the effects produced by fanatical preachers. But there are none whose feelings do not occasionally need and admit of excitement by the powers of eloquence; only there is a more exquisite skill required in thus affecting the educated classes than the populace.

Prejudices, tastes, local feelings, religious sentiments, and the like, require skilful treatment. They must not be *needlessly* offended. The qualities that conciliate and win, in general, are modesty, sincerity, earnestness, self-control. Be not a dictator when you should be only an instructor. Lordliness awakens resistance. All wish to appear excellent will be a hindrance. Says an eminent divine: 'Hints at a preacher's abilities and qualifications to speak on a given theme, apologies for the obscurities of truth, intimations of the preacher's toil in mastering a subject, comparisons with the work of others who have discussed it before him, claims to original discovery, of which there is really very little in any pulpit — these, and other ways which criticism cannot easily define, may give to hearers the impression that the preacher thinks much more of what he brings to his subject than of what he gets from it. Self-consciousness breathes in all that he utters.'<sup>1</sup>

There is a wide difference, however, between the blush of a diffident man and a downcast air. Modern taste will not tolerate much of the shrinking, apologetic style, which

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Austin Phelps.

marks the want of mastery. Men love to be addressed respectfully indeed, but fearlessly. We respect impudence more than imbecility.

Insincerity, misrepresentation, trickery, cannot compass any weighty moral ends. Right, fidelity to truth, is the law of broad and permanent success.

Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just,  
And he but naked, though locked up in steel,  
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

—*Shakespeare.*

Believe to be true or righteous the doctrine or the cause that you recommend to others.<sup>1</sup> Men listen with confidence and ease to a speaker whose method is open and frank; but with reserve, when they feel themselves liable to be practiced upon. Hypocrisy and deception close the avenues of the heart. In his diary, under date of July 27, 1784, Dr. Franklin states that, Lord Fitzmaurice having come to him for advice, he 'mentioned the old story of Demosthenes' answer to one who demanded what was the first point of oratory. *Action.* The second? *Action.*

I know that young people, on purpose to train themselves to the art of speaking, imagine it useful to adopt that side of the question under debate which, to themselves, appears the weakest, and to try what figure they can make upon it. But, I am afraid, this is not the most improving education for public speaking; and that it tends to form them to a habit of flimsy and trivial discourse. Such a liberty they should, at no time, allow themselves, unless in meetings where no real business is carried on, but where declamation and improvement of speech is the sole aim. Nor even in such meetings would I recommend it as the most useful exercise. They will improve themselves to more advantage, and acquit themselves with more honor, by choosing always that side of the debate to which, in their own judgment, they are most inclined, and supporting it by what seems to themselves most solid and persuasive. They will acquire the habit of reasoning closely, and expressing themselves with warmth and force, much more when they are adhering to their own sentiments than when they are speaking in contradiction to them. In assemblies where any real business is carried on, whether that business be of much importance or not, it is always of dangerous consequence for young practitioners to make trial of this sort of play of speech. It may fix an imputation on their characters before they are aware; and what they intended merely as amusement may be turned to the discredit either of their principles or their understanding.—*Blair.*

The third? *Action*. Which, I said, had been generally understood to mean the action of an orator with his hands, etc., in speaking; but that I thought another kind of action of more importance to an orator who would persuade people to follow his advice, viz., such a course of action in the conduct of life as would impress them with an opinion of his integrity as well as of his understanding; that, this opinion once established, all the difficulties, delays, and oppositions, usually caused by doubts and suspicions, were prevented; and such a man, though an imperfect speaker, would almost carry his points against the most flourishing orator who has not the character of sincerity.'

Nowhere is energy—the energy of earnestness—so indispensable as in oratory. To move mightily, there must be a capacity for being mightily moved. A speech may be full of merit, yet fail, if tamely delivered; or full of faults, yet succeed, if spirited. Burke, who spoke in the drowsy manner of an essayist, produced no effects in any way correspondent with the productions of his genius. These seem to have been spoken for posterity rather than for his contemporaries, who called him the 'dinner bell.' We are told that a man once went to Demosthenes, and in a manner wholly unsuited to a strong accusation, asked him to be his advocate against a person from whom, he said, he had suffered an assault. 'Not you, indeed,' said the orator, in a cold, indifferent tone, 'you have suffered no such thing.' 'What!' cried the man passionately, raising his voice, 'have I not received those blows?' 'Ay, now,' replied Demosthenes, 'you speak like a person that has really been injured.' Above all, the writer should write, the speaker should speak, with an *honest* enthusiasm. No mere violence of language, no mere theatrical exhibition of passion, no simulated fervor, can work the magical effects of reality.

Wouldst thou unseal the fountain of my tears,  
Thyself the signs of grief must show,

says Horace. 'In cases where profound conviction has been wrought,' says Emerson, 'the eloquent man is he who is no beautiful speaker, but who is inwardly drunk with a certain belief. . . . And the main distinction between him and other well-graced actors is the conviction, communicated by every word, that his mind is contemplating a whole, and inflamed by the contemplation of the whole, and that the words and sentences uttered by him, however admirable, fall from him as unregarded parts of that terrible whole which he sees, and which he means that you shall see.' We have before insisted that, as we should not begin abruptly, neither should we end in this manner. The peroration is the result of the discourse, and its beauty resides in the suitableness of its relation thereto. It should be neither too brief nor too extended; presenting distinct ideas, not vague effusions; expanding, enlarging, applying (if need be) the central thought, aiming to call into vigorous, harmonious activity the intellect, the imagination, and the feelings. The type will be intellectual or emotional, according as the main object is to inform and convince or to persuade. It has been remarked that the perorations of the great pulpit masters are generally moderate and gentle; as rivers, arriving at the sea, become slower yet more impressive.

Foregoing remarks render it unnecessary to enlarge on the cultivation of moral qualities — probity, candor, humanity, sympathy, reverence, modesty, courage. Nor need we repeat, but for emphasis, that manly virtues, tender sensibilities, must be joined to a fund of knowledge, both special and general. But we may be allowed to recommend and urge a habit of application and industry. Read, memorize, translate, practice. Study the masterpieces. Exercise yourselves in composing and speaking,



having *chewed* and *digested* your subject beforehand. Remember that the pen is the corrector of vagueness of thought and expression. 'Always prepare, investigate, compose a speech,' said Rufus Choate to a student, '*pen in hand*. Webster always wrote when he could get a chance.' In his journal, May, 1843, he wrote:

I am not to forget that I am, and must be, if I would live, a student of forensic rhetoric. . . . A wide and anxious survey of that art and that science teaches me that careful, constant writing is the parent of ripe speech. It has no other. But that writing must always be rhetorical writing, that is, such as might in some parts of some speech be uttered to a listening audience. *It is to be composed as in and for the presence of an audience*. So it is to be intelligible, perspicuous, pointed, terse; with image, epithet, turn; advancing and impulsive; full of generalizations, maxims, illustrating the sayings of the wise.

'My dear fellow,' said Curran to Philips, 'the day of inspiration has gone by. Everything I ever said, which was worth remembering—my *de bene esses*, my white horses, as I call them—were all carefully prepared.' Demosthenes was so diligent in his preparation, that his enemies said his orations smelt of the lamp. Brougham declares the perfection of public speaking to consist in introducing a prepared passage with effect. On this point, all that can be wisely said perhaps is summed up in the subjoined passage:

While speeches should not, except in rare cases, be written out and memorized entire, yet important passages, we think, should be; and, in every case where one is to speak on an important occasion, he should make himself so completely master of his theme by patient thought and frequent use of the pen, that the substance and the method, the matter and the order, of his ideas shall be perfectly familiar to him. Nor is it enough that he possess himself of sharply defined thoughts, and the precise order of their delivery; he must brood over them hour by hour till 'the fire burns,' and the mind glows with them—till not only the arguments and illustrations have been supplied to the memory, but the most felicitous terms, the most

vivid, pregnant, and salient phrases, have been suggested, which he will recall to an extent that will surprise him, by the matter in which they are imbedded, and with which they are connected by the laws of association. Proceeding in this way, he will unite, in a great measure, the advantage of the written and the spoken styles. Avoiding the miserable bondage of the speaker who servilely adheres to manuscript—a procedure which produces, where the effort of memory has not been perfect, a feeling of constraint and frigidity in the delivery, and where it has been perfect, an appearance of artificiality in the composition—he will weave into his discourse the passages which he has polished to the last degree of art, and he will introduce also anything that occurs during the inspiration of delivery.<sup>1</sup>

Yet again, do not fear to be seen in your own proper figure, and remember always that the body is more than raiment. Be concerned, first and supremely, to be intelligible; then to be interesting, attractive. Few that have listened to the eloquence of the late Bishop Simpson would have dreamed that the master-speaker who stood before them was, in his early youth, marked out from his fellows by his lack of power to speak attractively. Yet so it was. And the Bishop's words, in telling of that period and of the way in which he acquired the power which in his subsequent life was so markedly his, are so suggestive that they are worth repeating here. 'At school,' he says, 'the one thing I could not do was to speak. It cost me unspeakable effort to bring myself to attempt it, and I was invariably mortified by my failures. At length, having felt called to the ministry, I sought to forget myself as far as possible, and, banishing all thoughts of oratory, to give myself absolutely to the task of saying things so that people could readily understand them. And that is the fundamental secret of all true eloquence.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mathews.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### DEPARTMENTS OF EXPRESSION—POETRY.

God to his untaught children sent  
Law, order, knowledge, art, from high,  
And ev'ry heav'nly favour lent,  
The world's hard lot to qualify.  
They knew not how they should behave,  
For all from Heav'n stark-naked came;  
But Poetry their garments gave,  
And then not one had cause for shame.—GOETHE.

The sense of beauty enters into the highest philosophy, as in Plato. The highest poet must be a philosopher, accomplished like Dante, or intuitive like Shakespeare.—GLADSTONE.

THE world lives backward in memory as well as forward in hope. In the past are the heart's dead kindred. There are the great who rule our spirits from their urns; there our joys reappear as purer and more brilliant than they were experienced. There sorrow loses its bitterness, and is changed into a sort of pleasing recollection. 'I love everything that's old,' says Goldsmith; and Sir William Temple, alluding to the charm of antiquity, quotes the king of Aragon as saying: 'Among so many things as are by men possessed or pursued in the whole course of their lives, all the rest are baubles beside old wood to burn, old wine to drink, old friends to converse with, and old books to read.'

That distance thus quickens the play of the imagination is the chief reason why you may observe in the poets, as already exemplified, a certain infusion of the antique element, which in ordinary modern prose is either unknown or quite exceptional—'thou,' 'thy,' 'a-weary,'

'a-gone,' 'ken,' 'dire,' 'ire,' 'list,' 'ere,' 'surcease,'  
'whilom,' 'wight,' 'sooth,' 'sith,' 'erst,' etc.

You have also observed the marked distinction between the prose writer and the poet in the latter's use of enallage — the constant use, for instance, of the adjective for the adverb, as in —

A braying ass  
Did sing most *loud* and *clear*.—*Cowper*.

The sower stalks  
With measur'd step, and *liberal* throws the grain.—  
*Thomson*.

The poet's partiality for terse and euphonious compounds can hardly have escaped your attention. How forceful and beautiful are Longfellow's 'care-encumbered men,' Milton's 'young-eyed cherubim,' Shakespeare's 'black-browed night,' Homer's 'cloud-compelling Jove,' 'far-darting Apollo,' 'silver-footed Thetis,' 'many-sounding sea.' These, indeed, are only a more resonant variety of those descriptive and qualifying expressions known, in general, as epithets, which, while exhibited in their full splendor and harmony in our most vigorous prose, as Carlyle's, are most frequent in poetical composition, and happily so. You are familiar with Gray's oft-quoted lines:

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds.

Now consider how much is lost by a critic's proposed omission of the epithets:

The curfew tolls the knell of day,  
The herd winds slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his way,  
And leaves the world to me.

Now fades the landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his flight,  
And tinklings lull the folds.

In this respect Shelley surpasses all poets since the age of Elizabeth:

Beneath is a wide plain of billowy mist,  
Encinctured by the dark and blooming forests,  
Dim twilight lawns and stream-illuminated caves,  
And wind-enchanted shapes of wandering mist;  
And far on high the keen sky-cleaving mountains  
From icy spires of sun-light radiance fling  
The dawn.

All epithets may be said to illustrate a more or less spontaneous device of the mind to call up some *image* that shall carry the dry fact into the heart with compact, rose-tinted vividness. The prose statement is condemned as 'over-florid' and 'affected' long before it displays that profusion of imagery which is allowed in the poetic. The more spiritual and sympathetic the insight, the richer will be the colors, the more uplifting the life, the finer the æsthetic glow. Let the following suffice for further illustration:

And winter, slumbering in the open air,  
Wears on his smiling face a dream of spring.—*Coleridge*.  
How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!  
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music  
Creep into our ears; soft stillness and the night  
Become the touches of sweet harmony.  
Sit, Jessica: look how the floor of heaven  
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;  
There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdest,  
But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim.—*Shakespeare*.

The emotions awakened by such lines — charm, fascination, delight, or by whatever name expressed — are the characteristic of Fine Art. They belong eminently to such poems as Tennyson's *Lotos-eaters*, Keats' *Endymion*, and Shelley's *Cloud*.

**Rhythm.**—You have seen how historians and essayists have sought to enlarge and reinforce their meaning by the subtle yet poetic aid of harmony — that principle of proportion or symmetry of parts which appeals to the musical sensibility. The following passage will sufficiently refresh your recollection of this kind of movement:

God called up from dreams a man into the vestibule of heaven, saying, Come thou hither and see the glory of my house. And to the servants that stood around his throne he said, Take him and undress him from his robes of flesh; cleanse his vision, and put a new breath into his nostrils; only touch not with any change his human heart — the heart that weeps and trembles. . . . Then the man sighed and stopped, shuddered and wept. His overladen heart uttered itself in tears; and he said, Angel, I will go no farther, for the spirit of man aches with this infinity. Insufferable is the glory of God. Let me lie down in the grave from the persecutions of the Infinite, for end, I see, there is none. And from all the listening stars that shone around issued a choral voice, The man speaks truly; end there is none that ever yet we heard of. End is there none? the angel solemnly demanded. Is there indeed no end, and is this the sorrow that kills you? But no voice answered that he might answer himself. Then the angel threw up his glorious hands to the heaven of heavens, saying — End is there none to the universe of God! So, also, there is no beginning! — *Richter*.

By carefully regarding the accent — the stress thrown upon the pronunciation of syllables — you will perceive in this an alternate swelling and lessening of sound at more or less regular intervals. It is this measured motion that we are to understand by the term *rhythm*, which, in the sense of recurrence or correspondence, is applied to the roll of the surf, the reverberations of thunder, the coming

and going of the seasons, the ebb and flow of ocean-tides, the revolution of the planets.

**Metre.**—When the pulses constitute a definite succession—that is, when the rhythm is reduced to law—the result is *metre*. If either in Dryden's

The double, double, double beat,

or in Waller's

How sweet and fair she seems to be,

we attend to the order of accents, the syllables are seen to be so arranged that the first is to the second as the third is to the fourth and the fifth to the sixth, etc. In prose this superior regularity is inadmissible. The arrangement may be rhythmical, but never metrical—at least only fragmentarily, not characteristically or noticeably so.

Accent, as stated above, is a particular stress or effort of voice upon certain syllables of words, which distinguishes them from the others by a greater distinctness and loudness of pronunciation. Obviously, accent tends to lengthen the quantity of a syllable—that is, the time we dwell on it. English metre, being the regular recurrence of similarly accented syllables at short intervals, thus appears related to time, or quantity, the syllable receiving the rhythm-accent requiring relatively long time (—) for its enunciation, and the unaccented relatively short time (·). Thus in Wesley's

Hāngs mŷ hēlpless sōul ōn thēe,  
Lēave, āh! lēave mē nōt ālōne,

it is not meant that 'my' and 'me' are short absolutely, or that 'hangs' and 'not' are long *in* themselves, but simply with reference to the stress on syllables that precede and follow.

Theoretically, the rhythm-accent should agree with the

word-accent — should fall upon the syllable accented in prose, and *must* do so if it fall on a syllable in a word:

Complaining wént that little stréam.—*Bryant*.

Accent in metre may fall on syllables that have not a distinct word-accent, or on unemphatic monosyllables. In the following, nearly all the vowels (in themselves considered) have their short sounds:

Thē bŭsŷ rĭvŭlēt ĩn hŭmblĕ vālĕy  
Slĭppĕth āwāy ĩn hăppĭnĕss; ĩt ĕvĕr  
Hŭrrĭĕth ōn, ā sŏlĭtŭde ārōŭnd bŭt  
Hĕavĕn ābŏve ĩt.

If the syllables be marked relatively to the amount of time consumed by each in prose pronunciation, we shall have:

Thē bŭsŷ rĭvŭlēt ĩn hŭmblĕ vālĕy  
Slĭppĕth āwāy ĩn hăppĭnĕss; ĩt ĕvĕr  
Hŭrrĭĕth ōn, ā sŏlĭtŭde ārōŭnd bŭt  
Hĕavĕn ābŏve ĩt.

As ease and pleasure of utterance require us to avoid a succession of strong impulses, so they require us to avoid a succession of light ones. Hence we can never have three consecutive clearly pronounced syllables without a metrical accent. Therefore the poet, insisting upon the foregoing arrangement, compels us to read:

The bŭsy rĭvulēt ĩn hŭmble vālley  
Slĭppeth āway ĩn hăppĭnĕss; ĩt ĕvĕr  
Hŭrrieth ōn, ā sŏlĭtŭde ārōund but  
Hĕaven ābŏve ĩt.

It will be seen that there is a slight discrepancy between the rhythm and the word-accents. Reduced to quantity notation, in which the accent, pronounciative or metrical, makes a syllable long, this becomes:

— — — — —  
— — — — —  
— — — — —  
— — — — —



In general, the metrical, the prose, and the logical accent should coincide. By the last is meant stress that calls attention to the meaning. Accent thoroughly concurs with sense here:

Richard is Richard, that is, *I am I*.—*Shakespeare*.

No longer I follow a sound,  
No longer a dream I pursue,  
O happiness not to be found,  
Unattainable treasure, Adieu!—*Cowper*.

The following might be admissible as variations of an air, but certainly would not answer for the 'air' itself:

Sóon as thy létters trémbling Í unclóse.—*Pope*.  
I víew my críme, but kíndle át the víew.—*Ibid*.  
With jóy and lóve triúmphing ánd fáir trúth.—*Milton*.  
Then tóre with blódy tálon *thé* rent pláin.—*Byron*.

In any metrical arrangement of words, the recurring combination or group of accented and non-accented syllables is called a *foot*. The feet commonly used in English poetry are: the *iambus*, which consists of an unaccented syllable followed by an accented (Latin  $\sim -$ ), as 'prepáre,' 'convéy,' 'my hórse,' 'the dáys'; *trochee*, which consists of an accented syllable followed by an unaccented (Latin  $- \sim$ ), as 'rún to,' 'glóry,' 'róck of,' 'díscord'; *anapæst*, which consists of two unaccented syllables followed by an accented (Latin  $\sim \sim -$ ), as 'to the gráy,' 'and the dúke,' 'comprehénd'; *dactyl*, which consists of one accented syllable followed by two unaccented ones (Latin  $- \sim \sim$ ), as 'mériily,' 'gáily the,' 'swéetest and.'

A combination of feet is called a line, or *verse* (from the Latin *vertere*, to turn — the reader turning back from the end of one line to the beginning of another). Verses may be named according to the number of accents they contain — one-accent, two-accent, three-accent, etc. The following table explains the classical nomenclature:

Verse of one foot . . . . .	Monometer.
“ two feet . . . . .	Dimeter.
“ three feet . . . . .	Trimeter.
“ four feet . . . . .	Tetrameter.
“ five feet . . . . .	Pentameter.
“ six feet . . . . .	Hexameter.
“ seven feet . . . . .	Heptameter.
“ eight feet . . . . .	Octometer.

Thus:

Fair Daff | odils, | we weep | to see |  
 You haste | away | so soon: |  
 As yet | the ear | ly ris | ing sun |  
 Has not | attained | his noon. |  
*Stay, stay, |*  
 Until | the hast | ing day |  
*Has run |*  
 But to | the e | ven song; |  
 And hav | ing play'd | togeth | er, we |  
 Will go | with you | along. | — *Herrick.*

A need | less Al | exand | rine ends | the song, |  
 And, like | a wound | ed snake, | drags its | slow length | along. |  
 — *Pope.*

Comrades, | leave me | here a | little, | while as | yet 'tis | early  
 morn: |  
 Leave me | here, and | when you | want me, | sound up | on the |  
 bugle | horn. | — *Tennyson.*

All the above measures are iambic, except the last, which is trochaic. As here, verses of different length are often combined to avoid monotony or otherwise enhance the effect. Greater variety is given to the flow of the verse, also, by the interchange of feet—the iambus with the anapæst, the trochee with the dactyl, and conversely. An iambic line admits the trochee, most frequently in the initial foot. The characteristic metre is to be determined, in such cases, by the *prevalent* foot. The following are examples:

Till the | livelong | daylight | fail:  
 Thén to the | spícý | nút-brown | ale.—*Milton.*

Mérrily | swím we, the | móon shines bright;  
 Dównward we | drift through the | sháadow and | líght.  
 Únder yon | róck the | éddies | sléep  
 Cálín and | sílent, | dárk and | déep.—*Scott*.

Behóld, | how they tóss | their tórch | es on high.—*Dryden*.

The cówslip stártles in méadows gréen,  
 The búttercup cáatches the sún in its chálice,  
 And there's néver a léaf nor a bláde too méan  
 To bé some háppy créature's pálace.—*Lowell*.

Not only do measures intermix in the same verse, but verses of different feet as well as of different lengths are substituted for one another:

Now strike the gólden lýre agáin,  
 Bréak his bónds of sléep asúnder,  
 And rouse him like a ráttling péal of thúnder.  
 Revénge! Revénge! Timótheus críes,  
 See the Fúries arise;  
 See the snákes that they réar,  
 How they híss in the áir!—*Dryden*.

A further variation is in the use of a single syllable for a whole foot. This is virtually the omission of a syllable required by the law of the verse:

*Break, break, break,*  
 At the foot of thy crags, O sea!  
 But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
 Will never come back to me.—*Tennyson*.

Sometimes an extra syllable or two are added, as in the selection from Lowell, and in this:

I fly to scenes romantic,  
 Where never men resort,  
 For in an age so frantic  
 Impiety is sport.—*Cowper*.

Thy wórd's with gráce divíne  
 Imbúed, bring to their swéetness nó satiety.—*Milton*.

A verse consisting of integral feet—neither deficient nor redundant—is said to be *acatalectic*. It may also be

observed, in passing, that an intervening pause renders admissible two consecutive accents, as in the quotation from Milton. The pause, it should be added, cannot be neglected, in reading, without loss of rhythmical effect. It is an important means of varying and beautifying the rhythm:

From bránch to bránch the smáller bírds with sóng  
Sólaced the wóods, | and spréad their páinted wings  
Till éven; | nor thén the sólemn níghtingále  
Ceased wárbliŋ, | bút all níght túned her soft láys:  
Others | on silver lákes and rívers, báthed  
Their dówny bréast; | the swán with árched néck  
Betweén her white wings mántliŋ próudly, | róws  
Her státe with óáry féet.—*Milton*.

When the pause, as in the fourth line, intersects a foot, it is properly called a *cæsura* (cutting). With less propriety the term has been extended to all medial pauses.

**Rhyme.**—Metre, in the wide sense, as the regular recurrence of similarly affected syllables, includes *rhyme*, which determines a recurrence of sound in the closing syllable or syllables of successive or proximate lines. A perfect rhyme between two syllables requires (1) that they be identical in *sound* from the vowel to the end — *weight, straight* ; *sky, try* ; *sea, free* : (2) that the articulation before the vowel-sound be different — *call, fall* ; *strain, drain* : (3) that both be accented — *contáin, compláin* ; not *retáin, fóuntain*. Rhymes are single, double, or triple:

Sceptre and *crown*  
Must tumble *down*,  
And in the dust be equal *made*  
With the poor crooked scythe and *spade*.—*Shirley*.

Patron of all those luckless brains  
That, to the wrong side *leaning*,  
Indite much metre with much pains,  
And little or no *meaning*.—*Cowper*.

Take her up *tenderly*,  
 Lift her with care,  
 Fashioned so *slenderly*,  
 Young and so fair.—*Hood*.

Rhyme confined to the close of separate verses is called *terminal*, which is the English standard. Not infrequently, however, it occurs within the line, usually with a quickening effect. Shelley's *Cloud* illustrates both cases.

I bring fresh *showers* for the thirsting *flowers*  
 From the seas and the *streams*;  
 I bear light *shade* for the leaves when *laid*  
 In their noon-day *dreams*.

Rhymes like the foregoing, in which both vowels and consonants are in concord, are said to be *consonant*. A correspondence of vowels *only*, is called *assonance*. Thus:

Let me choose, and I will *dwell*  
 Where the sea, with sounding *tread*  
 Climbeth, till his feathery *crest*  
 Brush the mountain's feet.

The assonant or vowel-rhyme is an element so subtle as to be, to an unpracticed ear, scarcely perceptible. The Brownings employ it to an extent that more timid natures would hardly venture upon.

No poetical artifice stands higher in popular estimation than rhyme proper, yet the pleasing effect is not reached without great difficulty — without danger, we may say, of degenerating into vapid jingle. To aspiring rhymesters we recommend the remarks of the younger Hood: 'Let the beginner remember one thing — Rhyme is a fetter, undoubtedly. Let him therefore refrain from attempting measures with frequent rhymes, for experience alone can give ease in such essays. Only the skilled can dance gracefully in fetters.'

Unrhymed or *blank* verse, not held to so strict a law, allows the lines to run into each other with great liberty,

and hence is especially suited to themes of dignity and force, demanding more free and manly numbers than rhyme, which finds its most appropriate place in the middle regions of thought and sentiment. Its main form is the iambic pentameter, called *heroic* from its constant employment in the high epic. In this are written Milton's *Paradise Lost*, for instance, and the plays of Shakespeare. It was first established and popularized, however, by Marlowe in his play of *Tamburlaine*, the hero of which, a shepherd, aspirant to the throne of Persia, says:

For in a field, whose superficies  
Is cover'd with a liquid purple veil,  
And sprinkled with the brains of slaughtered men  
My royal chair of state shall be advanc'd;  
And he that means to place himself therein,  
Must armed wade up to the chin in blood, . . .  
Or make a bridge of murdered carcasses,  
Whose arches should be fram'd with bones of Turks,  
Ere I would lose the title of a king.

Other forms of blank verse, appearing here and there, but not likely to command the interest of many readers, and hardly to be imitated, are the choral measures, as in *Samson Agonistes*; the trochaic tetrameter, in *Hiwatha*; the iambic hexameter in *Evangeline*:

The sun to me is dark,  
And silent is the moon  
When she deserts the night

Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.—*Milton*.

Whence these legends and traditions,  
With the odors of the forest,  
With the dew and damp of meadows,  
With the curling smoke of wigwams,  
With the rushing of great rivers,  
With their frequent repetitions,  
And their wild reverberations,  
As of thunder in the mountains.—*Longfellow*.

Even as rivulets twain, from distant and separate sources,  
 Seeing each other afar, as they leap from the rocks and pursuing  
 Each one its devious path, but drawing nearer and nearer,  
 Rush together at last, at their trysting place in the forest:  
 So these lives that run thus far in separate channels,  
 Coming in sight of each other, then swerving and flowing asunder,  
 Parted by barriers strong, but drawing nearer and nearer,  
 Rushed together at last and one was lost in the other.—*Ibid.*

**Alliteration.**—Metre, in the comprehensive sense of consonance, includes also alliteration, or the recurrence, at short intervals, of the same initial letter. This, indeed, as a kind of correspondence in sound, is a species of rhyme. It was a prominent, formal feature of Anglo-Saxon verse. As a rule, two accented or emphatic words in one line, and one in the next, were alliterated. Thus:

Any science under *sonne*,  
 The *sevene* artz and *alle*,  
 But thei ben *lerned* of our *Lordes love*,  
 Lost is all the *tyme*.—*Langlande.*

The Eliza ethan authors combined the alliterative system with the rhyming. Spenser uses alliteration profusely. Along with antithesis, it was a main feature of Elizabethan Euphuism, a sort of superfine style that derives its name from the *Euphues* of Lily. Says the hero of this story:

There is no *privilege* that needeth a *pardon*, neither is there any *remission* to be asked, where a *commission* is granted. I speake this, Gentlemen, not to excuse the *offence* which was *taken*, but to offer a *defence* where I was *mistaken*. A cleare conscience is a sure *card*; truth hath the *prerogative* to speake with *plainnesse*, and the modesty to heare with *patience*.

Shakespeare ridicules the excess, or abuse, of it:

Whereat with *blade*, with bloody *blameful blade*,  
 He *bravely broached* his *boiling bloody breast*.

In modern English it occurs as an occasional variety, often with striking and beautiful effect, but is never a

prevailing characteristic. Popular proverbs, as 'Waste not, want not,' 'Meddle and muddle,' bear testimony to its naturalness.

**Verse-combinations.**—Two successive rhymes form a *couplet*; three, a *triplet*. A number of lines—from two upwards—taken together and so adjusted as to form a whole with respect to similar groups in a poem, is a stanza:

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,  
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

—*Tennyson*.

I said, 'I toil beneath the curse,  
But, knowing not the universe,  
I fear to slide from bad to worse.—*Ibid*.

A stanza of three lines, without regard to rhyme, may be called a *tercet*. A stanza of four lines is a *quatrain*, the most common of all. Some forms of this have received, in certain religious poems for public worship, peculiar names. We illustrate the construction of the three that are most familiar.—Long, Short, and Common Metre:

The fearful soul that tries and faints,		u	-		u	-		u	-		u	-	
And walks the ways of God no more,		u	-		u	-		u	-		u	-	
Is but esteemed almost a saint,		u	-		u	-		u	-		u	-	
And makes his own destruction sure.		u	-		u	-		u	-		u	-	

—*Isaac Watts*.

Nearer my Father's house,			-	u		u	-		u	-		u	-	
Where many mansions be;			u	-		u	-		u	-		u	-	
Nearer the throne where Jesus reigns,		-	u		u	-		u	-		u	-		
Nearer the crystal sea.			-	u		u	-		u	-		u	-	

—*Phæbe Carey*.

Through every period of my life		u	-		uu	-		uu	-		u	-		
Thy goodness I'll pursue;			u	-		u	-		u	-		u	-	
And after death in distant worlds,		u	-		u	-		u	-		u	-		
Thy glorious theme renew.			u	-		uu	-		u	-		u	-	

—*Addison*.



The stanza of five lines is of uncommon occurrence. The best example of it is Shelley's *Ode to a Skylark*:

Higher still, and higher  
From the earth thou springest:  
Like a cloud of fire,  
The blue deep thou wingest,  
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

The six-line stanza — notably exemplified in Byron's *Isles of Greece* — is much practiced:

The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!  
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,  
Where grew the arts of war and peace,—  
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!  
Eternal summer gilds them yet,  
But all, except their sun, is set.

Certain stanzas have acquired historical celebrity. The first of these is the *rhyme royal*, or seven-line stanza, of Chaucer and the Elizabethans. From the specimen that follows, it will be seen that the first four lines make an ordinary quatrain, of alternate rhymes; and that the fifth line repeats the rhyme of the fourth, while the last two form a couplet:

My throte is cut unto my nekke-bone,  
Saide this child, and as by way of kinde  
I shoulde have deyde, yea, longe time agone;  
But Jesu Christ, as ye in bookes finde,  
Will that His glory last and be in minde,  
And for the worship of his mother dere,  
Yet may I sing O *Alma* loud and clere.

Eight heroics (iambic pentameters), the first six rhyming alternately and the last two successively, compose the *ottava rima*, a favorite with the Italian and Spanish poets. The following specimen is from Byron's *Don Juan*:

Between two worlds life hovers like a star,  
    'Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge:  
How little do we know that which we are!  
    How less what we may be! The eternal surge  
Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar  
    Our bubbles; as the old burst, new emerge,  
Lash'd from the foam of ages; while the graves  
Of empires heave but like some passing wave.

The most noted of all stanzas is the Spenserian, so called from the author of the *Faerie Queene*, by whom it was borrowed from the Italians. It consists of eight heroics rhyming at intervals, and followed by a rhyming Alexandrine (iambic hexameter). It has been used with success by Thomson in his *Castle of Indolence*, and by Beattie in *The Minstrel*; but its most successful cultivator, among moderns, is Byron. Here is a specimen from his *Childe Harold*:

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free  
From what it hates in this degraded form,  
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be  
Existent happier in the fly and worm,—  
When elements to elements conform,  
And dust is as it should be, shall I not  
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?  
The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each spot?  
Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot.

It will be convenient to consider, next in order, the *sonnet*, though not a stanza, inasmuch as it is something complete in itself—a short poem. First cultivated in Italy, it was imported into England by Sir Thomas Wyatt, in the reign of Henry VIII. On the pattern of Petrarch, it is composed of two quatrains and two tercets (fourteen iambic pentameters); the two outside lines of each quatrain rhyming together, and likewise the two middle lines of each; the first, second, and third lines of the first tercet rhyming severally with the first, second, and third lines of the second. Thus:

When I consider how my life is spent  
 Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,  
 And that one talent, which is death to hide,  
 Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent  
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
 My true account, lest he, returning chide;  
 Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?  
 I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
 That murmur, soon replies, 'God doth not need  
 Either man's work, or his own gifts. Who best  
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
 Is kingly; thousands at bidding speed,  
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest;  
 They also serve who only stand and wait.—*Milton.*

In the second part, however, great variety prevails. Sometimes there are only two rhymes instead of three, and even when there are three, the order is often varied. Shakespeare always concludes with a couplet, and Wordsworth not seldom.

It will be noticed how thoroughly compacted and intervoven are the two quatrains, while to prevent the tercets from swaying apart, care is usually taken that there shall be no grammatical or logical break, and thus the whole structure is a unit.

What is a Sonnet? 'Tis the pearly shell  
 That murmurs of the far-off, murmuring sea;  
 A precious jewel carved most curiously;  
 It is a little picture painted well.  
 What is a Sonnet? 'Tis the tear that fell  
 From a great poet's hidden ecstasy;  
 A two-edged sword, a star, a song—ah me!  
 Sometimes a heavy tolling funeral bell.—*Gilder.*

**What is Poetry?**—Thus far we have had to do with the form of poetical composition; diction, rhythm, metre, rhyme—the last being an accidental, not a necessary element. Any production that bears the external mark of metre is customarily termed a poem, just as an essay

which chances to be spoken is indifferently styled an oration. But

‘Thirty days hath September,  
April, June, and November,’

is not poetry, though it be verse.

Beyond the melody of easy-flowing verses there must be manifest the gift to touch the vitals of a subject, a deeply sympathetic insight, a seeing with the inward as well as with the outward eyes, a rich personality, wealth of material, an intellect urged to its finest action by an ardent, a generous and beauty-loving sensibility. High poetry must have depth and energy of thought, and the highest is the most solidly, the most firmly set in truth. It must have breadth of feeling, heat to fuse the parts into unity. Over all, it must have ideality. History relates, science groups, philosophy explains, but poetry must create, must transmute into fresh and throbbing forms the stores gathered by perception and memory, setting its lucent and spiritualizing mirror behind the facts and events it exhibits, swathing its object in October hues of emblematic association and suggestion, throwing over the common things of life a super-earthly light. Going beyond the actual, however, it may not go beyond the possibilities of nature. ‘For as truth,’ says Hobbes, ‘is the bound of the historian, so the resemblance of truth is the utmost limit of poetical liberty.’ Its true function is to interpret, to illumine.

In scenic delineation, besides completing the harmony, the poet goes beyond nature in the richness of the accumulation, and colors the language with glowing illustrations. Such are the chosen scenes of romance and of fairy-land, the happy valleys and islands of the blest, the gardens of the Hesperides, the Elysian fields, and the pictures of Paradise.

The portraying of characters likewise undergoes the idealizing process. Men and women are produced with larger intellects, greater virtues, higher charms, than life can afford; it being agree-

able to contemplate such elevated natures. The bright points of real character are set forth, with omission of the dark features; strong qualities are given without the corresponding weaknesses, and incompatible virtues united in the same person. Lofty aspirations and practical sense, rigid justice and tender consideration, the *fortiter* and the *suaviter*, are made to come together, notwithstanding the rarity of the combinations in the actual.

Seeing that human society labors under a chronic want of disinterestedness and mutual consideration on the part of its members, there is a demand for select or heightened pictures of love, devotedness, and sympathy, as an ideal compensation.

The Ideal of story consists in assigning the fortunes and destinies of individuals with greater liberality and stricter equity than under the real or actual. The miseries as well as the flatness of life are passed over, or redeemed; the moments of felicity are represented as if they were the rule; Poetic Justice is supreme, and measures out to each man his deserts; mixed and bad characters are admitted along with the good, but all are dealt with as the poet's (which is also the reader's) sense of justice demands. . . . Poetic representations may be utterly and avowedly removed from truth, as in the tales of fairy land, and the romances of chivalry, in which case the pleasure is purely ideal; or they may color so lightly as to be taken for truth and reality, and then they inspire belief and intoxicate with hope. Dreams of future bliss, for the individual, or for the race, founded on sanguine feeling and plausible anticipation, exhibit the Ideal at the summit of its power.—*Bain*.

It has been truly and admirably said that the poetical mood is ever a visionary one. 'A poem is twofold, representing an actuality, and at the same time a tender lucent image thereof, like the reflection of a castle, standing on the edge of a lake, in the calm deep mirror before it: at one view we see the castle and its glistening counterpart. In the best poetry there is vivid picture-making: reality is made more visible by being presented as a beautiful show. It is the power to present the beautiful show which constitutes the poet. To conceive a scene or person with such liveliness and compactness as to be able to transfer the conception to paper with a distinctness and palpitation that

shall make the reader behold in it a fresh and buoyant type of the actual — this implies a subtle, creative life in the mind, this is the test of poetic faculty. To stand this test there must be an inward sea of thought and sensibility, dipping into which the poet is enabled to hold up his conception or invention all adrip with sparkling freshness.<sup>1</sup>

Such, in effect or in the aggregate, is the doctrine or teaching of the most authoritative definitions of poetry. Milton says of it, as in a parenthesis, 'which is simple, sensuous, and passionate.' Coleridge calls it 'a species of composition opposed to science, as having intellectual pleasure for its object, and as attaining its end by the use of language natural to us in a state of excitement.' Wordsworth styles it 'the breath and fine spirit of all knowledge, the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science.' 'Poetry,' says Voltaire, 'is the music of the soul, and, above all, of great and feeling souls.' 'Poetry,' says Hare, 'is the key to the hieroglyphics of nature.' Says Macaulay: 'The merit of poetry, in its wildest forms, still consists in the truth — truth conveyed to the understanding, not directly by the words, but circuitously by means of imaginative associations, which serve as its conductors.' 'It is not metre, but a metre-making argument, that makes a poem,' says Emerson in his characteristic manner. But of those who have essayed a consideration of the elements of poetry, none, in our opinion, has been so successful in formulating his conception as Mr. Stedman: '*Poetry is rhythmical, imaginative language interpreting nature.*' By 'nature' is here meant the world of matter and the world of mind inclusive. With the substitution of 'metrical' for 'rhythmical,' this would meet the requirements of scientific definition.

<sup>1</sup> George H. Calvert.

This is the high and catholic standard, the union of nature with art; pure thought, great thought, demonstrated to the senses, expressed in words that are pictures. Much poetry departs from the pure type, from want of solid knowledge, lofty aim, or central design and total effect; from morbid self-consciousness; from undue objectivity; from excessive moralization or didacticism, as Young's *Night Thoughts*, Pope's *Essay on Man*, Darwin's *Zoönomia*. The critics perceive that the mission of art is not to teach in homilies, but through the ministrations of the beautiful.

**Species.**—In the childhood of poetry, the different kinds of it, as now distinguished, were mingled in the same composition. Naturally, the first type to appear with any distinctness would be the *Lyric*, the brief, concentrated form under which the original bards poured forth, with instrumental accompaniment, the exultant strains of victory, the ardor of love, praise of their gods, lamentations over their misfortunes. Music, however, is an auxiliary only, and is commonly dispensed with. Lyrical poems may be broadly divided into Song, Ode, Elegy, and Sonnet. The first may be (1) sacred or (2) secular. The Psalms of David, hymns of the church, the old Greek hymns to the deities, usually sung by the choruses, are instances of the first class. Secular songs may be patriotic, convivial, comic, moral, high-sentimental (as Tennyson's *Break, break, break*), or amatory (Suckling, Burns, Moore, and Campbell, among a host of others, afford choice examples of this). The ode was anciently, but is not now, intended to be sung; often simple in structure, at other times most elaborate. It may display quiet thought or intense feeling, ranging from the pleasant and gay to the noble and sublime. Examples are Milton's *Hymn on the Nativity*, Dryden's *Ode to St. Cecilia*, Collins' *Ode on the Passions*, *Ode to Evening*, Keats' *Ode to a Night-*

*ingale*, Coleridge's *Ode to the Departing Year*, Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality*. The burden of the modern elegy is regret for the dead, or plaintive reflection on mortality in general. Well known examples are Milton's *Lycidas*, Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, Shelley's *Adonais*, and Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. The sonnet has already been illustrated.

The second great division of poetry is the *Epic*. The name is derived from the Greek *επος*, meaning primarily a word, then a speech, and by an easy movement, a narration. In contrast to the Lyric, therefore, which is an effusion of warm sentiment, the Epic is a metrical story, a poetical recital of events; possessing, at its best, a plot intelligibly started, a principal personage with subordinate characters and suitable incidents, many alternations and windings conducting to a definite termination, and withal, propriety of sentiment and elevation of style. Subdivisions are (1) the *Heroic*, or high epic, devoted to some elevated theme in history, legend, mythology, religion. The chief examples are Homer's *Iliad* and his *Odyssey*, Virgil's *Æneid*, Dante's *Divina Commedia*, Camoëns' *Lusiad*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*. To these may be added, though less regular and complete, Pollok's *Course of Time*, and the Anglo-Saxon *Beowulf*,—half-natural, half-supernatural, and all wild,—imported from the German forests and revised by an unknown Christian. We may mention also the *Paraphrase of the Bible*, by Cædmon (who died in 680), a story of the Creation, the Revolt, the Flood, and the Exodus. Unlike the other, it is a native of English soil, and marks, for us, the beginning of true English poetry. 'Others after him,' says Bede, 'tried to make religious poems, but none could vie with him, for he did not learn the art of poetry from men, nor of men, but from God.' The real heroic has a counter-



part or parody in the mock-heroic, which puts in heroic positions, and endows with heroic functions, meaner persons and objects, with the design of ridicule. (2) *Romantic*, distinguished from the Heroic by either a purely human control or a modified super-human agency, by the larger scope given to the elements of love, and by a lighter cast of metre—prevailingly the iambic tetrameter. Its key-note was given by the metrical romance of the Normans. Chaucer's *Romaunt of the Rose*, Spenser's *Fierie Queene*, Butler's *Hudibras*, Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, Byron's *Don Juan*, are examples. (3) *Story telling*, a still humbler form, a tale with complete story and *dénouement*, love or humor predominant. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece*, Byron's *Corsair*, Crabbe's *Tales of the Hall*, Keats' *Eve of St. Agnes*, Burns' *Tam o' Shanter*, Longfellow's *Evangeline*, Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*, may be cited. (4) *Historic*, including chiefly the rhyming chronicles; as that of Robert of Gloucester, if such may be called poetry at all. (5) *Mixed*, slightly epical or narrative, with a mixture of the sentimental, satirical, and reflective; as Byron's *Childe Harold*, or, better, Shelley's *Revolt of Islam*. (6) *Pastoral*, a depiction of rural life, and hence abounding in description, but correspondingly meagre in action. In Keats' *Endymion*, a series of descriptive sketches of nature is connected by a mythical story. The connecting thread in Thomson's *Seasons* is the course of the year. In Wordsworth's *Excursion*, though succession predominates, description is prominent. Clearer-marked types are Ramsey's *Gentle Shepherd*, Beattie's *Minstrel*, the *Cotter's Saturday Night*, by Burns, and Tennyson's *Idyls of the King*. The two great fathers of the pastoral are Theocritus and Virgil; the former the original in his *Idyllia*, the latter the imitator in his *Bucolics* and *Eclogues*. (7) The *Ballad*, devoted, like the romance, to

war; like the popular song, to conviviality; and, like the tale, to love; but less discursive, being short, simple, and rapid,—originally the ‘song of the dancers.’ The chief ballad metres are iambic lines of six and seven feet, and trochaic lines of seven feet, commonly written in two lines, tetrameter and trimeter alternately. Macaulay, Scott, Thackeray, Hood, Bayard Taylor, Saxe, and Holmes are a few of those who have contributed to this department. It was during the period of the Norman oppression that the ballad literature, singing of the outlaw and the forest, took form. Long stored in the memories of the people, it reaches us only in a late edition of the fifteenth century. *Chevy Chase*, the *Nut-brown Maid*, and *Robin Hood* will live forever.

The *Drama* is an imitation of human life. It is prose or poetry written to be acted, as the word itself signifies. Like the epic proper, it relates to some important event, has a leading character, with some complication of plot, and, for the most part, appears in the form of blank, or heroic, verse. But what the epic narrates as having been done, the drama brings before our eyes by means of dialogue between the actors, aided by stage appliances and directions. Like the oration, it must produce its effect at once, and therefore it must have a higher degree of probability than the romance and a stronger and simpler interest than the epic or novel. Its great work is impersonation, and its merit lies in the vividness of impression. According as it employs itself upon the grave and affecting or upon the light and gay, it divides itself into *Tragedy* or *Comedy*. The former in its severer type, leans to a fatal catastrophe, as in *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*; in its milder, it allows happy conclusions, thus permitting scope for poetic justice, as in *Measure for Measure*. Comedy proposes for its object neither great suffering nor great crime, but the decorums of behavior,

the follies, the humors, the slighter vices of the day, which may be censured and laughed at through a tissue of intrigues agreeably unwoven at last. But life is not all tears nor all laughter; and the English drama, true to the complexity of human nature, allows the tragic and the comic elements to be mixed in the same piece.

Both forms should have unity of subject and action. All the incidents must be subservient to one governing effect. All under-plots if there be such, ought to be made to tend toward the principal object, and to conspire in unravelling the main design. The Greeks added the two unities of time and place, the first of which requires that the transactions be capable of occurring within the time ordinarily occupied by the performance of a play, though this rule was early enlarged so as to permit the action to comprehend a whole day; the second, that the scene should never be shifted, but that the action of the play should be continuous to the end, in the place where it is supposed to begin. These rules were demanded by the nature of dramatic exhibition on the Greek stage, where the play went uninterruptedly forward, there being no pauses or intervals, and the stage ever occupied by the actors or the chorus until the conclusion of the whole. But the practice of suspending the spectacle totally between the acts (regularly five) gives more latitude to the imagination, and sets modern dramatists free from the ancient strict confinement. While the curtain is down, the conditions of time and locality may be easily changed without shocking the spectators by improbable circumstances. If the drama is set to music, the parts being sung instead of spoken, we have the *Opera*; if some parts are spoken and some sung, the *Melodrama*. Another variety is the *Mask*; or romantic adventure, with supernatural personages, fairies, giants, etc., as Milton's *Comus*. This is now out of fashion. Among the recognized varie-

ties of comedy are the *Genteel* and the *Low*; the *Travesty*, a mock-heroic; the *Furce*, restricted to three acts, and representing scenes that are broadly humorous.

The English drama, like the Greek, began in religion. At a time when sermons were not intelligible if preached, and when none but the clergy could read the stories of the Christian faith, it was introduced by the Church, to instruct the illiterate in saintly or Scriptural history — the only history then known — and to extend her influence by engrossing the sources of popular recreation. Priests were the writers or inventors, and frequently the actors, of the plays, usually written in mixed prose and verse. As mysterious subjects were chosen — the lives and marvels of the saints, the Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Creation, Fall, or Conquests of Hell — these performances acquired the general name of *Mysteries*. The 'theatre' was a cathedral, a scaffold in the open air, or a movable stage on wheels, drawn from street to street, or from town to town. As the cart stopped at given points, the actors threw open the doors, and proceeded to perform the scenes allotted them. A graduated platform in three divisions, represented Heaven, Earth, and Hell. Above were the Deity and His angels, passive when not actually mingling in the action; in the center moved the human world, the actors standing motionless at one side when they had nothing to say or do; and the yawning throat of an immeasurable dragon, emitting smoke and flames when required, showed the entrance to the bottomless pit, into which, through the expanded jaws, the damned were dragged with shrieks of agony by demons.

The *miracle plays* were, in the fifteenth century, transformed into *moral plays* by exchanging scriptural and historical characters for abstract, allegorical, or symbolical impersonations, — Pride, Gluttony, Temperance, Faith, Riches, Good Deeds, and the like. To relieve their

gravity, under which the audience were liable to yawn and sleep, the Devil was retained, and a more natural buffoon was introduced in the Vice, who acted the part of a broad, rampant jester. These two were the darlings of the multitude. Full of pranks and swaggering fun, a part of Vice's ordinary business was to treat the Devil with ribald familiarity, to crack saucy jokes upon him, to bestride him and beat him till he roared, and in the end to be carried off to Hell on his back.

The next step was the relinquishing of abstract for individual characters, a transition represented by Heywood's *Interludes*, long before acted in the midst of the morality for the amusement of the people, but now secularized, and made into a kind of farce.

The interlude paved the way for the representation of real life and manners, the first stage of which begins with Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister*, a comedy, and Sackvill's *Gorboduc*, a tragedy. It soon passed to a splendid maturity, extending in a single generation over all the provinces of history, imagination, and fancy. From the middle of the reign of Elizabeth to the accession of Anne (1580-1702), and particularly to the great rebellion (1580-1642), may be reckoned the period of the old English dramatists, among whom Shakespeare stood preëminent. He, with the constellation of kindred spirits about him, raised the romantic or Gothic drama to the highest perfection it has ever achieved. Its subsequent general tendency has been downward. Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, Knowles' *Virginus*, Bulwer's *Richelieu* and *Lady of Lyons*, are nearly the sole dramas, since produced, that have possessed literary merit and, at the same time, the qualities requisite for successful presentation. Scott, Byron, Shelley, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Browning, Tennyson, Swinburne, have adopted the dramatic form, but only to show how rare a

gift is popular dramatic art — the art of portraying actual life and passion in interesting situations. Most of the successful plays, on the other hand, do not and cannot, rise into the region of literature. They succeed less by vivid language and vigorous thought than by pomp and noise, transferring the stress from the mental to the physical.

Literary compositions run into each other, like colors; easily distinguished in their strong tints, but susceptible of so much variety, and of so many different forms, that we never can say precisely where one species ends and another begins. The shore-marks of poetical division rest, now on style, now on matter, now on purpose, but do not, save in single features, define and subdivide the field. In most poems there is a mixture of all the modes of poetic effect, leaving it doubtful which type is most closely adhered to. Convenient designations for ordinary speech would be *epic*, like Milton's great poem; *dramatic*, like Shakespeare's plays; *lyric*, like the songs in his plays; *narrative*, like the *Lady of the Lake*; *descriptive*, like the *Seasons*; *allegorical*, like the *Fuerie Queene*; *didactic*, like Pope's *Essay on Criticism*; *satirical*, intended to vituperate, to lash, or to reform, like the *Hudibras*.

It remains to indicate some of the uses of poetry. (1) It is the great thesaurus of beauty, embellishment, and illustration. The eminent Brougham has said that the art of happy quotation is second only to that of happy invention. (2) It is an important aid to genuine copiousness and flow of language. So practical a man as Dr. Franklin, having recognized it as an important source of his own excellent English, recommended the study of poetry and the writing of verse for this very purpose. (3) It cultivates a love of high thought, and tends to give to our taste for reading the stability of *habit*. (4) It gives an æsthetic culture and refinement to the mind, and disposes the heart to virtue. It is the province of poetry

to idealize nature and human life, to exhibit the soul in the richness and variety of its sentiments, in the nobleness of its aspirations and in the greatness of its possibilities. To it belong elegance, beauty, harmony, and grandeur,—all that can ennoble the fancy and exalt the affections. The end of poetry is refined enjoyment through emotion. In it there is always exultation, a subtle, blooming spirituality. ‘What a treat,’ exclaims Dr. Arnold, thinking of the resultant self-improvement, ‘it would be to teach Shakespeare to a good class of young Greeks in regenerate Athens; to dwell upon him line by line and word by word, and so to get all his pictures and thoughts leisurely into one’s mind, till I verily think one would, after a time, almost give out light in the dark, after having been steeped, as it were, in such an atmosphere of brilliance!’ To what end is our life, if not to soul culture, perpetual ascension in the scale of being? In this the poets help us by seizing and holding up to view the noblest, cleanest, and best, that there is.

‘The finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,  
The electric blood with which their arteries run,  
Their body’s self-turned soul with the intense  
Feeling of that which is, and fancy of  
That which should be.’

enable them, more powerfully than other authors, to awaken in their readers the states of consciousness that exist in themselves. (5) As a corollary, it is the mission of poetry to sweeten existence, to nourish human sympathies; to fill us with faith, strength, and cheer, when in the desert of life we faint and stagger; to reveal to our duller eyes and colder hearts the beauty and gladness of nature; in short, to furnish the finest and deepest-reaching discipline of which our spiritual being is capable. In order to receive these benefits, it must be *studied*, that is, read reflectively. To read anything profitably, read it actively.

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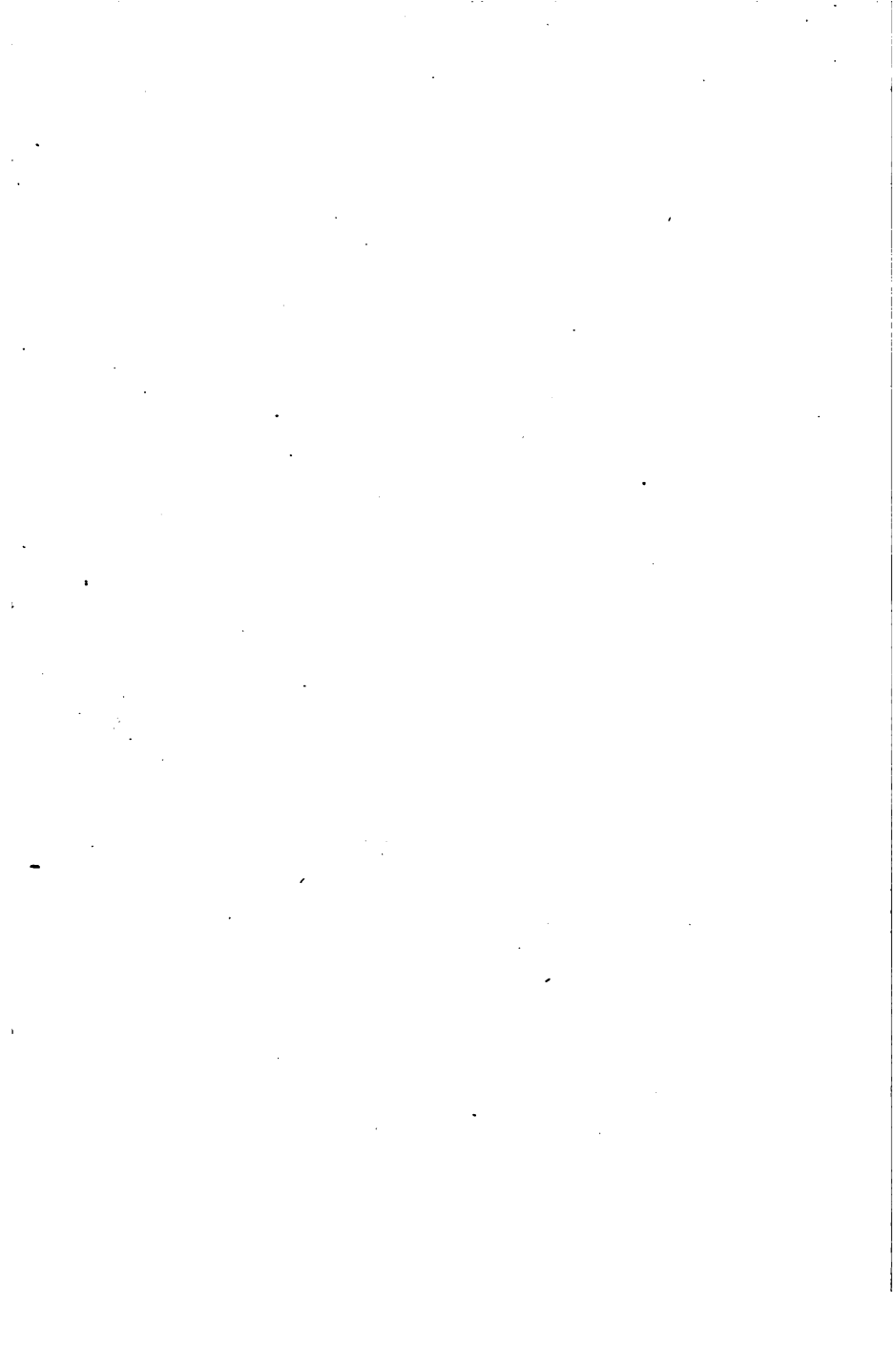
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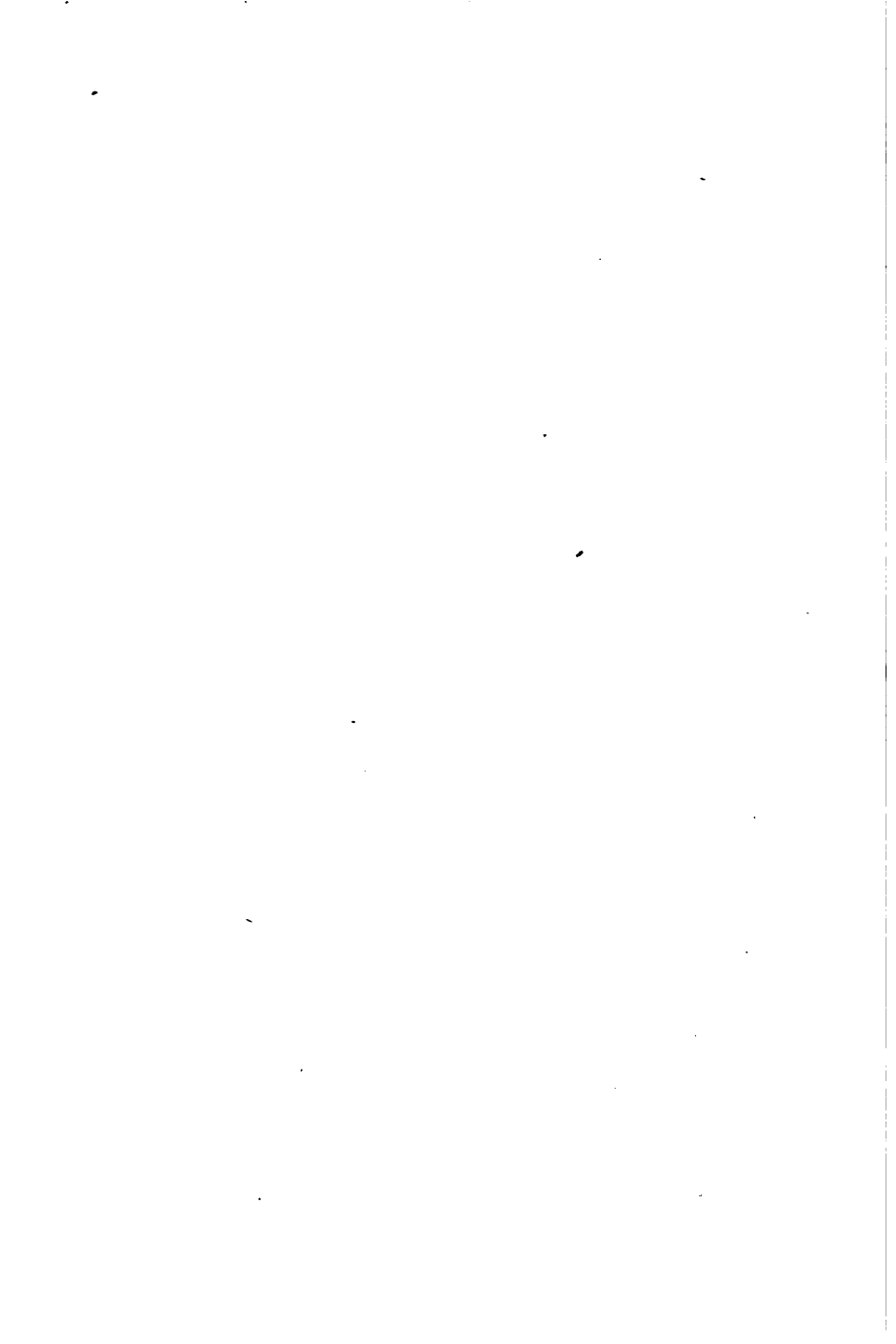
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